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Ministry Focus Paper Approval Sheet

This ministry focus paper entitled

REACHING THE GREATER COMMUNITY OF
ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH:
BEING MISSIONAL IN OUR LOCAL CONTEXT

Written by

PHILIP DER

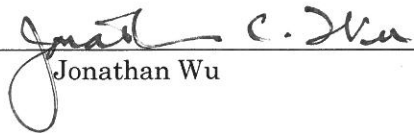
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requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

has been accepted by the Faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary

upon the recommendation of the undersigned readers:


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REACHING THE GREATER COMMUNITY OF
ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH:
BEING MISSIONAL IN OUR LOCAL CONTEXT

A DOCTORAL PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

PHILIP DER
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ABSTRACT

Reaching the Greater Community of St. Christopher's Anglican Church: Being Missional in Our Local Context

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2016

St. Christopher's Anglican Church is a Cantonese-speaking, Anglican congregation. It moved to Richmond Hill seven years ago with the intent of reaching local Chinese residents. However, this has not yet been accomplished. The purpose of this project is to awaken St. Christopher's theologically, and to know and love the community, our mission field. The first part of the project addresses the ministry context of St. Christopher's and the local community. It examines the history, changing culture, and organizational system of the parish.

The second part of the project engages the theological and biblical aspects pertinent to the missional purpose of the project. It begins with literature reviews of the theology of the missional church, the missional methodology in Chinese Christian churches in North America, and the art of building relationships. In the latter half of this part, the theological development of Anglican Evangelicals is presented. This is followed by the dialogue of *missio Dei* in the Evangelical community as well as theological perspectives on rooting. The findings of the above shape the content of the ministry initiative.

The final part includes the implementation of action plans in building relationships within the congregation and with the neighbors. The "Love Your Neighbors" small group campaign mobilizes the whole church to be aware theologically of faithful presence, to get to know our neighbors, and to invite them to church events. The campaign demonstrates very positive signs of the beginning of missional transformation. This will prepare the congregation for further change in enriching our souls and caring for our neighbors in the following year.

Content Reader: Jonathan Wu, DMin

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To Edmund, Margaret, Suk Wai, Naomi, and Eunice,
who support me in following the heart of the Lord

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PART ONE

MINISTRY CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

St. Christopher's Anglican Church (hereafter, St. Christopher's) began as a church plant of St. John's Chinese Anglican Church in 1991 in Toronto, Canada. After years of hard work to find a more Chinese-populated location so that the church could reach out to the Cantonese community, St. Christopher's finally settled on Richmond Hill, a suburb of Toronto, in 2008. However, six years later, despite being located in a highly Chinese-populated area, the congregation was only able to attract a handful of newcomers. Church attendance in the Richmond Hill congregation remains constant with an average of one hundred parishioners attending each Sunday.

When St. Christopher's was located in Toronto's suburb of Downsview, a predominantly Jewish area, the church assumed its minimal growth was a result of its location in a non-Chinese area. This excuse no longer held true in Richmond Hill. Both the church leaders and the parishioners were puzzled and disillusioned by the continual lack of growth in Richmond Hill. While location was once thought to be the most important element for church growth, the history of St. Christopher's disproved this belief. Location alone does not lead to an increase in parish membership. It is unrealistic to expect people to walk in just because a church is set up in an ideal location. Church growth requires more. As it is the Church's mission to reach the lost, proclaim the good news, and discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the parish must face both technical and adaptive challenges in order to become a missional church in the local context.

The purpose of this doctoral project is not simply to help St. Christopher's overcome the mystery of reaching the community, but also to unlock roadblocks that

many churches face today in being missional. First, reaching out to the neighbourhood has been the core attribute of St. Christopher's ever since its inception. The church has tried many different ways to draw people to come to church, including hosting evangelistic meetings, small group ministry, English classes for new immigrants, Tai Chi lessons, cooking classes, and line dance lessons. Although these latter initiatives attracted people to come to church for activities, very few became Christians. Those who became Christians gave credit to the relationship that they built with their Christian instructors. The faithful presence of these instructors played a major role in bringing newcomers to faith. Unfortunately, for various reasons these instructors could no longer teach. As a result, the church had to employ non-Christian instructors who did not share a passion for mission. The number of new parishioners reached through these outreach initiatives dwindled to none in recent years.

There are many ways to reach out to the community. The question is what the Holy Spirit wants the congregation to be and to do. Missional theology redirects the church's attention from what we think we could do for our neighbors to meeting the needs identified by those living and working in our community. Missional thinking is not about making sure that the church has new members to fill the pews and pay the bills. It is about discovering what God has been doing in the community and joining him. This theology reshapes our thinking about God's kingdom, which is not confined within the church but is already at work beyond the church. Our role as Christians is to identify God's footprint in people's lives and invite them to respond to the love of God. This is the new frontier of doing mission locally.

Second, if this research project helps St. Christopher's grapple with the fundamental theology and praxis of missional thinking, then these methods could also serve other churches in switching from a survival mode to a missional form of ministry. As many mainline churches struggle to survive financially and are faced with the limitation of human resources, many have forgotten what it means to be a church. Some even mistakenly believe that being Christian is being nice and kind. Many different faith groups, including Sikhism and Buddhism, also teach people to be good. However this is not the only mission Jesus gave to the Church. Therefore, if this doctoral project is successful in helping St. Christopher's to re-focus its ministry from what the parish wants to what God wants and from what the church cannot do to what God can do, then this project can assist other churches or church leaders in re-affirming the purpose of being church.

This doctoral project explores the reasons behind the stagnation of St. Christopher's. These reasons include the fact that most core members live outside of the area of the church, and as a result there is a disconnection between the church and the local community. In 2012, the church's first incumbent, Matthias Der, was called to serve in Hong Kong, and he and his family concluded their twenty years of ministry at St. Christopher's. Consequently, church leaders began the search for a new incumbent, and I was inducted as the church's second incumbent in September 2013.¹ My first order of business was to understand the culture and structure of St. Christopher's, while parishioners began adapting to a new leadership style. After numerous consultations,

¹ I am the younger brother of Matthias Der.

many initiatives were implemented to enhance worship, to streamline the church organizational structure, and to improve the use of the church facilities.

This project searches for a new way of being church in this relatively new neighbourhood. Being missional to the locals is introduced in various ways, in an effort to encourage the congregation to discern God's calling by understanding and engaging the local community. A missional process, the "Love Your Neighbors" campaign, involves taking initiative first to love one another within the church, and then extending our love to neighbours by listening and building relationships with them.

To address this challenge, this doctoral project facilitates the congregation's re-examination of the purpose of being church. It is easy to be blinded by technical change when one tries to solve problems. In order to bring the gospel to people, the parish has been duplicating what other churches are doing by offering similar outreach programs in the church building. These classes may be effective in drawing people to the church facilities, but most participants either attend other churches or do not feel a need for the gospel.

Being church means one should take the initiative to reach out to neighbours to show them that Christians care. This project intends to re-construct the congregation from a mission-thinking parish to a congregation that exercises mission. Through the "Love Your Neighbors" campaign, the congregation is better equipped to respond to God's call in the community.

The thesis of this project is to mobilize congregation of St. Christopher's to understand, reflect, and engage with the local Richmond Hill community, particularly the Chinese community. Before going out to the community and meeting neighbours,

parishioners must first learn to build relationships with one another in Christ. Jesus commanded his disciples, “Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).² Building stronger relationships within the church will not only strengthen the congregation, but will also prepare the parish to reach out to neighbours, moving from strangers to acquaintances and to friends. After this first step, the parish can explore together how it can participate in God’s work in the neighbourhood as a whole.

The first part of the project addresses the ministry context of St. Christopher’s and the local community. It examines the history, changing culture, and organizational system of the parish. Part One also studies the demographics of the town of Richmond Hill, in particular the Chinese community. This review summarizes the church’s past attempts and limitations in reaching out to the community.

The second part of the research project engages both the theological and biblical aspects pertinent to the missional purpose of the project. It begins with a literature review of the theology of the missional church. This part also presents the missional methodology of Chinese Christian churches in North America and the art of building relationships. Part Two also explains the theological development of Anglican Evangelicals, the concept of *missio Dei* in the Evangelical community, and theological perspectives on the concept of rooting.

The final part of the project includes the implementation of action plans in building deeper relationship within the congregation and with neighbors. It addresses

² All Scripture quoted is taken from the New Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

challenges of engaging and caring for our neighbours. The pilot project involves the formation of the “Love Your Neighbors” working group, a church-wide campaign through small group activities, and the actual practice in caring for one another and our neighbors. Part Three also studies and evaluates the relationships within the church and with neighbors, carefully considering the timeline for leadership development and personnel support.

Therefore, seven years after the move of St. Christopher’s from Downsview to Richmond Hill, it is time for the congregation to examine how the parish can engage in the local community. This project lays a theological foundation of the meaning of missional church. Based on this finding, the “Love Your Neighbors” ministry initiative attempts to cultivate a more loving environment within the church. Parishioners are encouraged to reach out to their neighbors by meeting them and getting to know their struggles and joys. Through listening, the parish will learn to discern the work of the Spirit and to join in God’s plan.

CHAPTER 1

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

This chapter presents the context of St. Christopher's Anglican Church. It reviews the narrative of the parish and presents the cultural system based on the socio-economic background of the church members. It also examines the demographics of Richmond Hill, where the parish has settled since 2008, and the challenges the church faces in reaching out to its neighbors.

St. Christopher's was formed in 1991 as a church plant of St. John's Anglican Church. As British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, visited Beijing in 1984 to draft a plan of returning Hong Kong to China in 1997, fear of a Chinese Communist government in Hong Kong triggered a new wave of exodus. Those who could afford to leave began immigrating to Canada, United States, England, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. In 1989 Hong Kong residents watched in horror on television as the Chinese army cracked down on student protesters in the Tiananmen Square. This generated the biggest wave of immigrants out of Hong Kong in history, reaching some 60,000 per year by the early 1990s.¹ To meet the needs of the massive immigrants, St. John's decided to plant

¹ Dai Tian, "Hong Kong Sees a Second Wave of Emigration," Caixin Online, <http://english.caixin.com/2013-11-11/100603483.html> (accessed July 29, 2015).

another church in the late 1980s. After three years of praying and preparation, the Anglican Diocese of Toronto designated St. Christopher's-on-the-Heights, a church which had recently been closed, to be St. John's church plant. St. John's commissioned twenty committed families to begin a new parish at St. Christopher's in September 1991.²

The Ministry Development of St. Christopher's Anglican Church

St. Christopher's has gone through four major areas of ministry development in the past twenty-four years. It has gone from being a church plant to being a church planter; it has physically relocated from Downsview to Richmond Hill; it has developed from being a church with small groups to being a small group church; and it has moved from reaching Chinese immigrants to ministering to second-generation Chinese Canadians. Each of these developments significantly impacts the church resources and shapes the character of the congregation.

When Matthias Der was inducted on March 1, 1992 as the first incumbent of St. Christopher's, there were a total of forty-five members. They started a Wednesday weekly Bible Study group, youth group, and *The Knights* softball team. They were passionate about spreading the good news through friendship evangelism and hoped to bring more people to Christ. But St. Christopher's-on-the-Heights was located in Downsview, a predominantly Jewish area. Public transit to the area was minimal, and it was not an easy place to find after exiting the highway. Thus there were geographical barriers to attracting Chinese people to the church.

² The Parish of St. Christopher on-the-Heights, Anglican, *Tenth Anniversary Memorabilia (1991-2001)* (Toronto: The Parish of St. Christopher on-the-Heights, Anglican, 2001), 14.

The first major ministry development of St. Christopher's is from being a church plant to planting a church. Two years after the founding of St. Christopher's, St. Cyprian's Anglican Church located at the Tri-Church realized that there was a growing Chinese population in its neighbourhood. St. Cyprian's is located right beside the only and flourishing Chinese shopping centre, Leslie-Finch Square, in the Hillcrest district within North York. Because St. Cyprian's is an English congregation, the congregation was unable to reach out to the Chinese residents. Hence, they invited St. Christopher's to start a new mission using their facilities. The leadership team at St. Christopher's was excited about this mission opportunity and started St. Christopher's Outreach Centre in 1994, offering public seminars, English-as-second-language classes, Tai Chi, and line dancing classes. The turnout rate was so encouraging that they started a Cantonese worship service in 1996. More than forty people attended the 9 a.m. worship service at the Tri-Church location when it first started, and the number of baptisms at the Centre superseded the number at the main church site.

However, not everyone at St. Christopher's was excited about this news. Those who remained at the main church site in Downsview complained that the incumbent and the leadership team spent too much time and energy at the Outreach Centre, and ignored the needs of the second-generation members at St. Christopher's in Downsview. At that time, the second-generation parishioners were in their teenage years, and they were ready for and desiring English worship for their spiritual needs. In response to this request, a third worship service at St. Christopher's began in 1997. On one hand, this contributed to the ministerial diversity at St. Christopher's, and on the other hand, human resources were drawn thin. This growing pain persisted as members of the mother church felt that

the church had now become three distinct churches—the Cantonese-speaking congregation at Downsview, the English-speaking congregation at Downsview, and St. Christopher’s Outreach Centre. It was increasingly difficult to get to know members of the other “congregations.”

The second development is the church’s relocation from Downsview to Richmond Hill in 2008. From 1997 to 2007, St. Christopher’s made several attempts to relocate or amalgamate with another Anglican Church located in an area with a large Chinese population. None of these plans were successful. Then in 2008, St. Gabriel’s Anglican Church in Richmond Hill was closed down and the property was put up for sale. The incumbent, Matthias Der, proposed to the church leaders that they considered moving the church to one of the areas north of Toronto highly populated by Chinese immigrants. In the midst of other unsuccessful attempts to relocate, this unexpected news of the sale of St. Gabriel’s produced hope. The congregation quickly held a special vestry, and over 95 percent of the members approved the purchase of St. Gabriel’s Church.³

St. Christopher’s-on-the-Heights, Downsview, moved to Richmond Hill in 2008 in pursuit of its mission to reach out to more Chinese Canadian families. The church officially changed its name to St. Christopher’s Anglican Church in the same year. The Outreach Centre at Tri-Church was also renamed to St. Christopher’s North York Church, while the new site was named St. Christopher’s Richmond Hill Church. In the four years following the move, the parish spent most of its energy completing renovations. Meanwhile, most of the members of the leadership team lived outside of the town of Richmond Hill. They had to adjust to the new environment and the commute between

³ Anthony Leung, a founder of St. Christopher’s, interview by author, summer 2014.

North York and Richmond Hill. The distance between the two sites is about seventeen kilometers, which amounts to a twenty-five-minute drive.

Matthias Der believed that the church would grow by at least ten people per year once they moved to Richmond Hill.⁴ For many reasons, this hope has not yet been fulfilled at the time of this writing. Immediately after the move from Downsview to Richmond Hill, the church attracted a handful of new members, but at the same time, the church also lost a handful of members who decided not to commute to Richmond Hill and instead joined the mother church, St. John's. In July 2012, after twenty years of incumbency at St. Christopher's, Matthias Der felt that it was time for him to move on. He was called to begin a new chapter of his career in Hong Kong, and I joined the parish as the new incumbent in September 2013.

The third development at St. Christopher's relates to its small group ministry. This ministry has historically been one of the key instruments used for nurturing church members, equipping leaders, and enhancing fellowship with one another, as St. Christopher's has focused on small group ministry since the time of its founding. However, upon my arrival as incumbent in 2013, the small group ministry underwent a significant reform. I began meeting with all the small group leaders three times a year to hear their concerns, to provide support and training for Bible study leadership, to deal with group dynamics, and to prepare them whenever there is a church-wide small group campaign. Each group is now encouraged to have a leader and an assistant leader with the hope being that the assistant leader will one day plant a new group and become a

⁴ Patrick Tam, St. Christopher's Richmond Hill Church representative in the Advisory Board, "Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire," Richmond Hill, January 13, 2015.

group leader. The small group leaders' meeting is also a communication channel.

Leaders are briefed about decisions made in the Advisory Board for church ministry development so that they can inform their members. Likewise, any feedback from group members can also be conveyed back to the church leaders through small group leaders. Under such nurturing and with improved communication, St. Christopher's is transforming from a church with small groups to a small group church.

The fourth major development of ministry is serving the second-generation members of the congregation. Matthias Der commented that the second-generation ministry "is not a secondary ministry to the Chinese ministry; rather, it is an essential aspect of the Chinese ministry."⁵ The Church is obligated to nurture the faith of the next generation (see Deuteronomy 6:6-7). The English ministry was started with children's Sunday school and then youth group. As the youth became adults, the ministry also extended to include a career adult groups and a couples group.

Upon my arrival in 2013, the children's ministry was losing momentum with four very tired teachers, and the youth group had ceased to exist for the past five years. Several changes were made to focus on the church's youngest members. A new superintendent was recruited, and the children ministry was revamped with fourteen teachers teaching four classes. The time for Sunday school was changed in order to engage more students and teachers. In addition, a systematic curriculum was employed, the Sunday school classrooms and the English chapel were painted, and new flooring was

⁵ Matthias Der, interview by author, Richmond Hill, July 24, 2014.

installed. Finally, after six years of having no youth group at the church, in 2014, the church launched a youth group with bi-weekly meetings.⁶

The Cultural Context of St. Christopher's

Every congregation has its own culture. When a parish has more than one congregation, there are subcultures within the same church. Both North York Church (hereafter, NYC) and Richmond Hill Church (hereafter, RHC) share a similar subculture, while Richmond Hill English (hereafter, RHE) has its own subculture, which the other two congregations find difficult to comprehend at times. This section addresses the background of the members, and factors which influence their view regarding financial expenses for ministry. In addition, eight categories of immigrant culture are identified. The significant contrasts of subcultures are between new and old immigrants, and first and second generations.

One Church, Three Subcultures

In general, St. Christopher's is relatively affluent compared to most churches in the Greater Toronto Area. Members are educated with at least one degree, and there are many professionals, such as engineers, doctors, lawyers, business people, retired

⁶ A youth group was formed in the early days of the church history, followed by establishing a contemporary English worship service in 1997. At the peak of the youth group, it had over twenty-five members with two active softball teams. As the English ministry continued to grow, St. Christopher's had to hire a full-time English pastor to further develop the ministry. Unfortunately, each pastor only stayed for three years or fewer at St. Christopher's. This lack of continuity and long-term visioning hindered the growth of the English ministry both spiritually and numerically. At the same time, many youth went away to university and the youth group gradually dismantled. Their regular meetings ceased in 2008. One of the repeated requests to me when I started in 2013 was to start a youth group in order to stop the loss of teenagers from the congregation.

university professors, high school principals, and teachers. Our parishioners are predominantly Chinese from Hong Kong, primarily of middle and upper-middle classes.

The subculture of NYC is made up of mostly elderly and some working-class people. As the NYC worship starts at 9 a.m. on Sundays, it naturally attracts seniors who are early risers and those who need to go to work on Sundays. Families with children or teens are unlikely to attend this morning worship. There is a group of early retired Baby Boomers, whose elderly parents or adult children are living or working in Hong Kong. Hence, they are “snow birds” who spend their winters in Hong Kong, which means church attendance is low between November and March. Despite the smaller congregation at NYC, its atmosphere is warm and lively.

RHC and RHE worship at 11 a.m. on Sundays, which allows parents to drop off their children at the English worship as they go to the Chinese worship. This timing of simultaneous English and Chinese worship should theoretically be more attractive to young families. However, most parents prefer to worship with their children in the English service. This creates another aging congregation in RHC, similar to the one at NYC. In contrast, RHE has a younger congregation with an average age of forty and below.

The age difference between the two congregations makes each of them unique in their worship. RHC is traditional, with a relatively formal and serious worship atmosphere. This congregation strives for quality in music, choir anthems, reading, and intercession. On the other hand, RHE worships with contemporary hymns accompanied by a band. They worship in a more relaxed atmosphere; small children eat and walk around while the service is going on. Most RHE members enjoy or have adapted to this

casual environment. When the parish has combined services, some RHC members complain about the noise and feel that the RHE members are disrespectful of the solemn worship, while the younger generation finds RHC worship boring, uptight, and too long. This clash of subcultures between the two congregations creates tension, and it calls for greater acceptance and creative solutions.

In terms of the value of financial matters, St. Christopher's has been blessed with annual financial surpluses over the past twenty-four years. Even though there is a deficit for the first eleven months of the year, the parish ends up with a surplus after Christmas each year. The parishioners are generous and they ensure that the church will not go into deficit, thereby allowing the church to give to other organizations in need. For instance, at the annual Community Fun Day, members of the congregation absorbed their own expenses, so that every penny raised during the event went to the local food bank and a local charity. In November 2015, the executives distributed another \$3,200 to other Christian charitable organizations even though the church warden had a predicted additional financial need of over \$60,000 at that time. By faith, the predicted short-fall was resolved by the end of December. In the same year, St. Christopher's raised over \$65,890 for other Christian organizations, which equals 18.3 percent of our total expenses.⁷ As Jesus said and quoted in Acts, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Once again this demonstrates the faith, mission and generosity of St. Christopher's.

⁷ This amount includes the Diocesan allotment and gifts to charities. The unaudited total expenses in 2015 was \$360,242.

Waves of Immigration from Hong Kong to Canada

Due to the immigration policy in Canada and the political environment in Hong Kong, there are different stages of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada. There have been two major waves of immigration that have taken place. The first major influx of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants in the second half of the twentieth century started in 1967, after a “free immigration policy.” This policy was the first of its kind in Canada, it contained no racial quotas on Chinese immigrants.⁸ According to Hong Kong TVB television documentary, there were riots happening in Hong Kong in the same year, which lasted for eight months with widespread protests; over 1,100 homemade bombs were detonated.⁹ Many young professionals left Hong Kong during this period of unrest. They took advantage of the opportunity of the new Canadian immigration policy and moved to Canada. The Chinese population in Canada grew more than threefold from “34,627 in 1941 to 118,815 in 1971.”¹⁰ In addition, many visa students from Hong Kong also applied to become Canadian citizens. This group was educated and fluent in English. They worked in the mainstream work force and integrated into the Canadian culture.

The second wave of immigrants from Hong Kong was after Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s visit to Beijing in 1984. Those who had experienced the Chinese Cultural Revolution never wanted to live under the Communist rule. Their fear created another exodus from Hong Kong. According to Statistics Canada, the number of

⁸ Guang Tian, *Chinese-Canadians, Canadian-Chinese: Coping and Adapting in North America* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1999), 78.

⁹ Hong Kong TVB, “香港大事 1967 (上)” (“Hong Kong Major Events in 1967 Part I”), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z82wgcNyI94> (accessed February 23, 2015).

¹⁰ Tian, *Chinese-Canadians, Canadian-Chinese*, 78.

immigrants from Hong Kong between 1981 and 1990 was 59,315, and the number soared to 100,075 in the next decade after the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing June 1989. By 2006, 215,430 people had emigrated from Hong Kong to Canada.¹¹

In the context of St. Christopher's, eight categories of Hong Kong immigrants are identified (see Appendix A for a table summary). They are the pioneers (those who came to Canada between 1967 and 1984); the Canadian-born Chinese; the "sacrificers" (the middle-aged group who moved to Canada between 1984 and 1997); astronaut families; the Chinese Canadians (children of the third and fourth groups); the "returned-returned" immigrants (Chinese Canadian immigrants who returned to Hong Kong to work and then returned to Canada to retire), the "snow birds" (those who fly back to Hong Kong to stay for a period of time each year); and the seniors (those who came to Canada to reunite with their families).¹² These eight categories of members at St. Christopher's create a complicated mixture of Chinese Canadian subcultures within the church. The good news is that regardless of category, all have found their small groups and worship preferences at one of the three congregations. The challenge for leaders, however, is identifying which category they belong to and providing the appropriate pastoral care to each of them depending on their emotional, spiritual, and physical needs. Spiritual leaders are required to be sensitive in order to better understand parishioners. As the Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians, "For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks,

¹¹ Statistics Canada, "2006 Census Topic-Based Tabulations," <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/tbt/index-eng.cfm> (accessed February 24, 2015). This number does not include the Canadian-born children of these immigrants. This data also excludes Chinese immigrants from China, Taiwan, Philippine, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and other countries.

¹² Ian Young, "Children of Rich Chinese Home Alone in Canada Face Challenges," *South China Morning Post*, November 25, 2013, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1364563/children-rich-chinese-home-alone-canada-face-challenges?page=all> (accessed July 22, 2015).

slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Therefore in the advisory board and the executive committee, there are representations from all three congregations and from different categories of members. The leadership team works hard to uphold the unity in diversity.

Relationships between the Three Congregations

Due to the unique setting of being one church with two locations and three services, the relationships among the congregations are quite interesting (see figure 1).

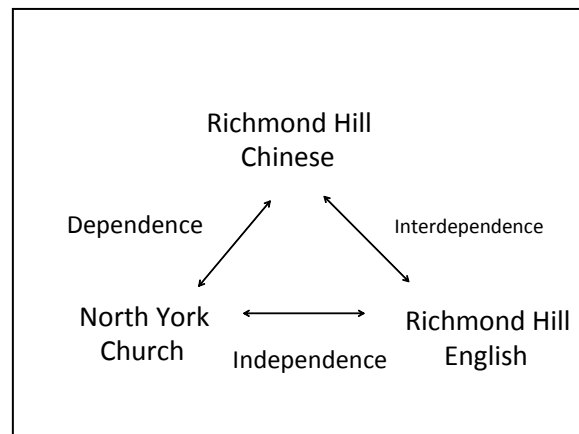


Figure 1. Ambiguous Relationship among the Three Congregations of St. Christopher’s

The relationship between RHC and NYC is one of dependence, as RHC has been supporting NYC since 1996, both financially and physically in terms of human resources such as servers, an organist, and donation counters. The mentality of helping from RHC and being helped in NYC remains unchanged since the founding of NYC.

The relationship between RHC and RHE is one of interdependence, as they would not exist or be able to grow without each other. From the RHC congregation’s point of

view, the English ministry is essential because it provides spiritual care for their youngsters and attracts new young families. When young families come, their elderly parents also come along. At the same time, financially, RHE depends greatly on RHC, as the members of RHE are mostly students with some working professionals. With their current financial capacity at RHE, they are not able to independently afford a full-time pastoral staff.

Meanwhile, RHC experiences some level of frustration as the RHE congregation becomes more mature. In the past seven years, the RHE congregation has been physically separated from the main sanctuary as they worship in the portable, and each service ends at different times. In other words, members of the two congregations come and go without seeing each other on most Sundays. In addition, the RHE congregation seldom participates in any activities over at the main sanctuary and vice versa.

Consequently, the relationship between them has gradually become distant, and RHC members mourn the absence of young people in the church. This ambiguous relationship and reality were acknowledged in 2014 with the theme: “Our Church—My Home.” The RHC and RHE congregations were made aware of the situation, and there were initiatives to bring the two congregations closer together. Since then the relationship has improved slightly. Youth group members were involved in Christmas decoration at RHC, and RHE members helped out in painting the parking lot. Continual efforts are required to rebuild the relationship between the RHC and RHE congregations.

NYC and RHE have an independent relationship. NYC members feel that they are too far away and too old to support any RHE events. Similarly, RHE members feel that they have no association with NYC, therefore there is no need to participate in any of

their events. They see NYC as a mission outpost of RHC, not of RHE. The “Our Church—My Home” campaign in 2014 has raised this awareness, and it is evident that RHE members find no relevance in connecting with NYC members.

Richmond Hill as the Backyard of Toronto

Richmond Hill is traditionally a suburban town just north of Toronto. This town has been settled by residents and immigrants who want to avoid the expensive housing in the city and do not mind some distance to commute to work. The demographics of the town reveal this multi-cultural composition.

The town of Richmond Hill is located north of Toronto. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the indigenous peoples, the Iroquois, set up a village at what is now Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive.¹³ According to historian Robert Stamp, the town of Richmond Hill was founded with the extension of the famous Yonge Street from downtown Toronto. The street was originally designed by the lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, for military, fur trading, and strategic purposes.¹⁴ It was officially opened in 1796.¹⁵ The village of Richmond Hill began to take shape after the completion of Yonge Street in the early eighteenth century. By 1830, the name “Richmond Hill” was well established. There were “two inns, two blacksmiths, a general store, a chair maker, a shoemaker, as well as a church, cemetery and school” in the

¹³ Robert M. Stamp, *Early Days in Richmond Hill: A History of the Community to 1930* (Richmond Hill, ON: Richmond Hill Public Library Board, 1991), 24.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

village.¹⁶ Meanwhile, other villages were established to the north at Elgin Mills and to the south at the Langstaff area. The village was officially incorporated in 1873.

The economy in Richmond Hill remained quiet until the introduction of automobile in the early twentieth century. The concept of commuting to work from rural Richmond Hill to Toronto became a new trend at the Richvale area.¹⁷ However due to the world wars and depression, the village did not grow significantly until it expanded its borders to include subdivisions to the east and obtained town status in 1957. In 1971, the province implemented a regional government, and Richmond Hill increased in size from 1,944 acres to 24,129 acres.¹⁸

In the 1980s, Richmond Hill was proud to become the training centre for professional ice skaters. Every weekday, many Canadian professional skaters trained and practiced at Elgin Barrow Arena Complex, including Canadian Olympians Richard Peirce, Elvis Stojko, and ice dancers Tracy Wilson and Rob McCall.¹⁹ Richmond Hill began to thrive in the 1990s as Chinese immigrants moved in. The new development of the Beaver Creek Business Park attracted a range of businesses, from high-tech companies such as Compaq and Dell to cinemas. Hong Kong investors transformed Highway 7 between Leslie and Bayview, starting with the completion of the Time Square

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Fayle, "In-Depth History of Richmond Hill."

¹⁹ Marney Beck Robinson, Joan M. Clark, and Valerie Bakshi, *Later Days in Richmond Hill: A History of the Community from 1930 to 1999* (Richmond Hill: Town of Richmond Hill/Richmond Hill Public Library Board, 1999), 220.

Chinese Mall in 1995. With the new Highway 407 completed in 1997, new immigrants began settling in Richmond Hill.²⁰

The town of Richmond Hill, like any other suburban town in the greater Toronto area, has experienced tremendous growth in population since the 1990s recession. According to the 2011 census, Richmond Hill's population reached 185,540, a growth of 14 percent compared to the 2006 census.²¹ The most common dwelling is single-detached houses comprising 62.1 percent of the total dwellings. The average value of each dwelling is \$587, 427. The most common languages spoken are English at 42.1 percent, followed by Cantonese at 8.9 percent and Persian at 8.8 percent. Chinese is the largest ethnic group (17.5 percent), followed by Italians and Iranians (8.3 percent and 6.7 percent, respectively). Christians make up of 50 percent of the residents. Within the population, 47.3 percent have at least a bachelor's degree, which is more than double the national average of 22.2 percent.²² The higher education level also reflects a higher average employment income of \$68,943, which is about one third higher than the national average of \$41,795.²³ The most common occupations are sales and services (20.9 percent), business, finance, and administration (19.6 percent), and management

²⁰ 407 Express Toll Route, "History," <http://www.407etr.com/about/background-information1.html> (accessed February 20, 2015).

²¹ Richmond Hill, "Town and Ward Demographic Profile 2011," http://www.richmondhill.ca/documents/2011_richmond_hill_demographic_profile_web.pdf (accessed February 20, 2015), 5.

²² Employment and Social Development Canada, "Indicators of Well-being in Canada," <http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=29> (accessed February 20, 2015).

²³ Statistics Canada, "2011 National Household Survey: Data tables."

(14.6 percent). The median age in the town is 39.8 years of age, younger than the national average age of 40.6 years of age.²⁴

There are six wards in the town. St. Christopher's Church is located at the border between Ward Two and Ward Three. Of the two, Ward Three is slightly more populated with 30,000 people compared to 25,000 in Ward Two.²⁵ In Ward Two, 14.3 percent of the people are Chinese and half of these are Cantonese speaking. The rest speak either Mandarin or English. However, in Ward Three, 42.3 percent of the population is Chinese and approximately half of them speak Cantonese.

Ward Two is an older neighbourhood and less affluent than Ward Three. Ward Two dwellings were established in the 1950s and 1960s, while Ward Three is a newer neighbourhood built in 1997. The dwellings in the two wards reflect the difference. In Ward Two, 25.2 percent of the dwellings are apartments, and 59.8 percent of the dwellings are single-detached houses, which is lower than the town percentage of 62.1 percent. In Ward Three, only 1.3 percent of dwellings are apartments, and there is a much higher number of single-detached houses (78.1 percent).²⁶ The rest are either semi-detached or townhouses. Newer houses in Ward Three are larger and more expensive with an average price of \$742,358, compared to \$502,010 in Ward Two.²⁷ One can see

²⁴ Richmond Hill, "Town and Ward Demographic Profile 2011," 9; Statistics Canada, "Age and Sex Highlight Tables, Census 2011," <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/hltfst/as-sa/index-eng.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed February 20, 2015).

²⁵ Richmond Hill, "Town and Ward Demographic Profile 2011," 9.

²⁶ Ibid., 41 and 55.

²⁷ Ibid., 51 and 37.

the socio-economic differences when crossing Bayview Avenue from Ward Two on the west side to Ward Three on the east side.

Theology and Praxis of St. Christopher's: Reaching the Richmond Hill Community

This section examines the spirituality and theology of St. Christopher's, which influence the way the parish reaches out to the community. These beliefs also restrain St. Christopher's from becoming missional or going beyond our limitations. In order to live out the *missio Dei*, technical and adaptive challenges must be identified.

The theology of St. Christopher's is shaped by its mission statement:

Through Jesus Christ, we unite to . . .

- Reach up to worship and deepen our communication with God
- Reach in to care, nurture and equip disciples
- Reach out to evangelize and serve the community²⁸

This mission statement reflects the fact that the parish is Christo-centric and focuses on the incarnation and salvation of Jesus Christ. The four major departments of worship, caring, nurturing, and mission are set up based on the mission statement. Each department has five to ten members who meet quarterly to plan and discuss their special focus. The parish always puts ministry and mission before budget. The congregation believes they will find the financial resources whenever a need arises for ministry development.²⁹

Church leaders were asked to describe St. Christopher's in a questionnaire distributed in January 2015. One leader described the church as “not that Evangelical,

²⁸ St. Christopher's Anglican Church, “Home page,” <http://stchris.ca/wp/> (accessed February 22, 2012).

²⁹ For example, when the vestry approved the hiring of a full-time pastoral staff in 2010 for a three-year term, the church remained financially sound with a surplus during that period of time. This demonstrated their faith in God for ministry.

conservative and not liberal”; this leader also wrote, “Members of St. Christopher’s are eager to learn and are willing to share their spiritual journey.”³⁰ Another leader observed that the congregation focused on “how to live out their lives as Christians more than just focusing on theology.”³¹ One individual stated that congregants have an “unrelenting care of others with an instilled sense of social justice as inspired by Jesus Christ.”³²

Outreach programs were started at St. Christopher’s when the Outreach Centre was established at NYC in 1994. Since moving to Richmond Hill, the congregation has started cooking classes, a homework club, and a community gym night. A new Mandarin class was launched in March 2015 and a table tennis program is currently being planned. In the past, these outreach programs have been effective in attracting newcomers to the church. However, during the past five years, these outreach programs have been unable to draw new members.³³ Clearly, the church can no longer provide a program and expect participants to join the church. The key lies in building genuine loving relationships and practicing faithful presence using the platform of these outreach classes.³⁴

Naming the limitations of St. Christopher’s will help the church to identify what the congregation is and is not. Meanwhile, this may also promote exploration of ways to overcome the parish’s shortcomings. There are usually two kinds of challenges:

³⁰ Patrick Tam, “Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire.”

³¹ Anonymous, “Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire,” Toronto, 19 January 2015.

³² Alan Ho, member of the Parish Advisory Board, “Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire,” Toronto, 19 January 2015.

³³ Of these three classes, the cooking classes and homework club have both ceased to continue due to the lack of instructors/tutors. At the time of this writing, the community gym night may also be closed as it is only attended by parishioners and is not drawing any neighbors.

³⁴ This will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

technical challenges and adaptive challenges. Technical challenges are described by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky in their book, *Leadership on the Line*: “Every day, people have problems for which they do, in fact, have the necessary know-how and procedures. We call these technical problems.”³⁵ On the other hand, adaptive challenges require behavioural change, which usually comes from the top and takes longer. Heifetz and Linsky write, “We call these adaptive challenges because they require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization or community.”³⁶

Technical Challenges for St. Christopher’s

The first technical challenge is being one church with two locations and three congregations. The senior pastor is unable to concentrate his effort in two locations. When St. Christopher’s had three pastoral staff between 2010 and 2012, the Sunday attendance jumped from 148 in 2010 to 162 in 2011, as illustrated in figure 2. Then it dropped in 2012 to 158 when the incumbent left and there was a change of the English pastor in the same year. As expected, the average Sunday worship attendance dropped to 143 between 2012 and 2013 in the absence of an incumbent, and there was a gradual upward trend after the induction of the new incumbent in September 2013. The stability of a congregation is dependent upon the presence of a spiritual leader.

³⁵ Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard School of Business, 2002), 13.

³⁶ Ibid.

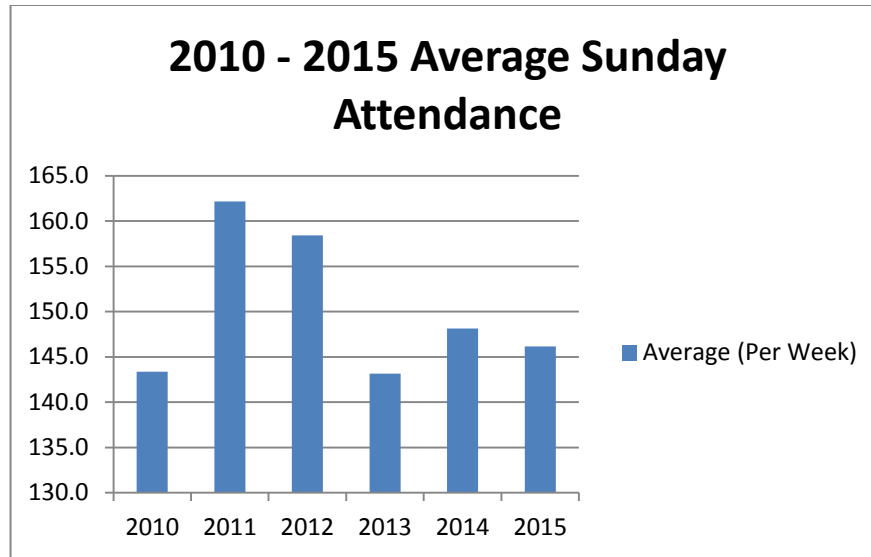


Figure 2. 2010-2015 Average Sunday Attendance

Another technical challenge of St. Christopher's is that all of the core members live outside the Richmond Hill neighbourhood. They do not know the church's neighbours, nor what they value and what their needs are. This hinders the rooting of the church into the local community. When members bring friends to church, it is difficult for them to commit when they could attend other churches closer to where they live. Ideally, if more core members were living in the church vicinity, their ministry would be more effective. However this is a major decision that may not be achievable.

Adaptive Challenges for St. Christopher's

The above two limitations are technical challenges for the church, but there are also adaptive limitations which may take a longer time to change. Four out of nine church leaders who responded to the January 2015 questionnaire indicated that one of the

limitations of St. Christopher's is the lack of human resources.³⁷ One leader felt that it is due to the church's aging population.³⁸ Another expressed that many core group members are pre-occupied by their work and family demands.³⁹ In the opinion of these leaders, the church is weak in recruiting and empowering leaders. Despite this criticism, though, forty-three members, or approximately 29 percent of those who attend on Sunday mornings, hold leadership positions in the church. Of these, many work long hours and have families with children and elderly parents to look after. This is a strong showing, but it is true that St. Christopher's lacks proper planning, organization, and execution with respect to the management of lay leaders. The adaptive challenge for the core leaders is to recruit and manage its lay leaders well.

The second adaptive challenge is to build a stronger sense of ownership among members. A plate of leftover snacks was left untouched in the church hall for over a week, even though many people had walked by. No one bothered to throw it into the garbage. This simple example demonstrates that many members think that someone else will take care of it and this is not their business. They come to the church for worship and fellowship, and everything else is none of their concern. Many consider themselves not as hosts of the church family but as patrons.

The third adaptive challenge relates to the immigrant culture, which generally has a "mind your own business" mentality. In the questionnaire, one leader noted that many

³⁷ Diana Wong, Alice Chung, Benita Pong, and Patrick Tam indicated in "Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire" that the lack of human resources is a limitation at St. Christopher's.

³⁸ Alice Chung, Caring Department Head, "Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire," 18 January 2015.

³⁹ Alan Ho, "Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire."

of our members “are accustomed to living in their comfort zones and they have no intention reaching out to the outside community.”⁴⁰ Consequently, most are content just being together, and they feel uneasy meeting new neighbours and sharing the gospel with strangers.

The fourth adaptive challenge is the need for passionate spirituality, which is “the degree to which faith is actually lived out with commitment, passion, and enthusiasm.”⁴¹ Based on the Natural Church Development Survey completed by church members in 2011, passionate spirituality is the minimum factor in both the NYC and RHE congregations.⁴² This is echoed by our former English pastor, Rev. Carol Friesen, who stated, “We are limited only in that our expectations of God are too low and our life of prayer and listening to God is weak.”⁴³

There are some exceptions, of course, as a small percentage of members of RHC and NYC attend Bible study twice weekly and make numerous pastoral visits each week to the needy or the shut-ins. Recent data shows that 256 members of St. Christopher’s belong to at least one small group or fellowship group meeting either weekly or bi-monthly (see Appendix C).⁴⁴ This number is much higher than the average Sunday attendance, which was 148 in 2014 (see Figure 2, p. 27). Members of the parish do

⁴⁰ Alan Ho, “Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire.”

⁴¹ Christian A. Schwarz, *Color Your World with Natural Church Development: Experiencing All That God Has Designed You to Be* (Kelowna, BC: Leadership Centre Willow Creek Canada, 2005), 110.

⁴² St. Christopher’s Anglican Church, “Parish Profile,” 2012, 22-23.

⁴³ Carol Friesen, English Pastor of St. Christopher’s, “Reflection of Our Church Questionnaire,” Richmond Hill, 13 January 2015.

⁴⁴ There are several people attending more than two small groups. There are also non-St. Christopher’s members attending the church small groups. Others, such as the snow birds, participate in small groups when they are in town.

exhibit strong interest in seeking God and fellowship. However, increased attendance at Bible studies does not always translate into passionate spirituality; biblical application in real life is the ultimate target.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the narrative of St. Christopher's, from its history to its cultural system. The context of Richmond Hill and the working theology and praxis of the church are also presented. This concludes the ministry context in Part One. Part Two explores theological reflections on literature related to missional leadership, on which the theological foundation of transforming the parish into a missional church is built.

PART TWO

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents literatures pertinent to being missional within the local context. The first section focuses on the essence of missional church, and the subsequent section discusses the challenges facing Canadian Chinese ministry. In the last section the possibility of being missional in local community through the art of building relationships is investigated. These fundamental theological discussions are necessary to strengthen St. Christopher's understanding of being missional.

The Essence of Missional Church

This section focuses on the notion of missional church. Lesslie Newbigin's *The Open Secret* develops missional theology; Darrell Guder's *Missional Church* responds to the decline of the North American Church by presenting missional ecclesiology; and James D. Hunter's *To Change the World* explores incarnational theology in missional thinking. Together they give a broad introduction to the concept of missional church.

The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission, by Lesslie Newbigin

Missional theology in the West was developed by Lesslie Newbigin, a Church of Scotland missionary, returned to England after thirty years of missionary service in India

as a pastor and bishop of the Church of South India. *The Open Secret* reminds readers that it is God who engages the world in mission. Christian mission is an open secret as it is “open in that it is preached to all nations, secret in that it is manifest only to the eyes of faith.”¹ The theme of this book is bringing forth the mission of God through “mission as faith in action” of the Father, “mission as love in action” of the Son, and “mission as hope in action” of the Spirit.²

The main argument is that in the name of Jesus, Christians have the authority to proclaim the good news to all people wherever they are. Throughout the Bible, God elected his people to be the bearers of faith, not for exclusive privilege, but for the responsibility of bearing witness.³ God reveals this secret of salvation only to the chosen. The mission of the Son was not only to proclaim the kingdom of God, but he himself embodied the presence of this kingdom.⁴ To make known this kingdom, the Church must let the Holy Spirit lead this mission.⁵ Newbigin emphasizes that mission is not about the extension of the Church. He writes, “Mission is not essentially an action by which the church puts forth its own power and wisdom to conquer the world around it; rather it is an action of God, putting forth the power of his Spirit to bring the universal work of Christ for the salvation of the world nearer to its completion.”⁶ In other words, the

¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), back cover.

² Ibid. These phrases are chapter titles that structure his theology of mission.

³ Ibid., 32.

⁴ Ibid., 41.

⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁶ Ibid., 59-60.

missionary needs to appreciate that the same Spirit who can speak through the Scripture can also speak through new converts, similar to Peter's experience when he met Cornelius in the book of Acts (Acts 10).⁷ At the end of the book, Newbigin presents different ways of relating the gospel and other religions. He shares that Christians should not carry the mindset that we are saved and they are lost.⁸ This will hinder us from having a genuine relationship with others. Instead, he shares that he was there simply to witness for Jesus, rather than to judge others.⁹

The Open Secret answers some typical questions many Christians ask today, such as, "Should Christians share the gospel with those who are of another faith?" "Is evangelism about church survival?" and "Isn't mission about overseas missionaries?" These questions hinder many Christians from having a passionate witness for the Lord. Newbigin affirms that it is God who has the mission to the world. Through the acts of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the mission is carried forward through the Jews to the Gentiles. Since it is God's mission, evangelism is not an extension of a church or a denomination. It is about the salvation of all people. Mission should be a natural attribute of a church. As Christians are the bearers of faith, we are responsible to make known the Kingdom of God. The Church ought to embody the kingdom as Christ does. Witnessing to Christ is not about judging non-Christians, but loving them and showing them the grace of God. This book clarifies some of the misunderstandings surrounding mission and reinforces the theology of being missional.

⁷ Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, 136.

⁸ Ibid., 173.

⁹ Ibid., 174.

The limitation of this book with respect to the context of St. Christopher's is the specific cultural environment. As St. Christopher's is a Cantonese-speaking parish with an English-speaking second-generation congregation, *The Open Secret* does not address issues of breaking cultural barriers to reach our neighbors. The fear of offending others and knowing other people's business still prevents many parishioners from talking about their faith with others.

Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America,
edited by Darrell L. Guder

Following the theology of mission from Newbigin, *Missional Church*, edited by Darrell Guder, is the next classic book on this subject. The term *missional* is derived from a three-year research project undertaken by six acclaimed North American theologians of the Gospel and Our Culture Network. These six individuals contribute chapters to the book. The purpose of this book is to respond to the crisis of the decline of the North American Church. The origin of the crisis is deeply rooted in the practice and theology of both American and Canadian churches. The theme of this book focuses on "who we are [as Christians] and what we are for. The real issues in the current crisis of the Christian Church are spiritual and theological."¹⁰

To address the spiritual and theological issues of the Church, *Missional Church* develops five characteristics of missional ecclesiology: biblical, historical, contextual, eschatological, and practical.¹¹ The six contributors build their arguments based on the framework of these five attributes of missional ecclesiology. The book begins with the

¹⁰ Darrell L. Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1998), 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

cultural context of North America. Based on the context of North America and the current situation of the Church, contributor George Hunsberger explains that during the mid-1900s, the collapse of colonialism led to the independence of the Third World.¹² The new global Church realized that a mission-sending church also has a responsibility toward its local community. Guder writes, “It is a shift from an ecclesiocentric (church-centered) view of mission to a theocentric (God-centered) one.”¹³ As a result, mission is no longer a part of the local church, but it is the total of the church. The mission of the local church is to be a sent community. First, God sent Jesus; then Jesus sent the disciples and the Church. Hunsberger also stresses that the Church does not expand or advance God’s Kingdom, but instead the reign of God is already here, waiting for people to experience and receive.¹⁴ Therefore the Church has a role to present the “sign and foretaste” of God’s reign, and function as “its agent and instrument.”¹⁵

In the last two chapters, Guder describes what the structure of this missional community would look like when there is missional leadership in the Church. This structure has to be theologically rooted in the *missio Dei*, the mission of God.¹⁶ Then three principles of this missional church structure would emerge: a “scriptural base” which is “culturally diverse” and “rooted in the local particular community.”¹⁷

¹² George Hunsberger, “Missional Vocation: Called and Sent to Represent the Reign of God,” in Guder, *Missional Church*, 81.

¹³ Ibid., 81.

¹⁴ Ibid., 94.

¹⁵ Ibid., 101.

¹⁶ Guder, *Missional Church*, 222.

¹⁷ Ibid.

This book lays an important framework for this research project with regard to what a missional church should look like. As St. Christopher's is in the midst of transformation, church leaders and members need to understand where we are as a parish, and where this missional transformation will lead us. *Missional Church* presents a solid and clear theology that it is God's mission to create a church. Church is a foretaste of the kingdom, and mission is the purpose for which the Church exists. In other words, the reason St. Christopher's engages in mission is not because the congregation is aging or dying. The parish engages in mission because it is the *missio Dei*, the mission of God. In order to transform St. Christopher's from an outreach mission program to a missional congregation, church leaders must have this awareness and gradually change their practice of doing ministry by listening to the Holy Spirit. By sensing the needs and dynamics of our community, the members of St. Christopher's will learn to root themselves into the neighborhood and respond to the guidance of the Spirit.

This book provides an overview of missional ecclesiology. The limitation of this book is that after reading it, most pastors would not have any idea how to bring change to their churches. While it sets a tone of missional thinking, it is not a practical guidebook for being missional. Nonetheless, this pioneer presentation challenges churches to re-think mission and to generate a new wave of missional movement in the Evangelical world.

*To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy & Possibility of Christianity
in the Late Modern World*, by James D. Hunter

The third book in this literature review on the essence of missional church is *To Change the World*. After learning about the beginning of missional theology from

Newbigin and missional ecclesiology from Guder, next is to explore incarnational theology in missional thinking. James D. Hunter indicates that this book attempts to answer two major questions. The academic question is, “How is religious faith possible in the late modern world?”¹⁸ Then a more personal question is, “How do believers live out their faith under the conditions of the late modern world?”¹⁹ Hunter admits that there are puzzling inconsistencies between the Christian faith and what Christians do in the world.²⁰

Hunter uses three essays to build his argument on the pursuit of changing the world. In the first essay, as suggested by the subtitle of the book, he asserts that it is ironic that the harder the Christian Church has tried to change the world culture, the more secular it has become. He affirms that “to be Christian is to be obliged to engage the world, pursuing God’s restorative purposes over all of life, individual and corporate, public and private. This is the mandate of creation.”²¹ The basic assumption is that one can change a culture one person at a time.

In his second essay, Hunter compares the three major Christian culture-changing movements in our modern history: the Christian right, the Christian left, and the neo-Anabaptists. They have all misunderstood the power of Christian idealism in our society and were unable to bring a lasting change. Using simpler terms to describe these three movements, Hunter calls them “defensive against,” “relevance to,” and “purity from”

¹⁸ James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), ix.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., xi.

²¹ Ibid., 4.

paradigms of cultural engagement.²² But all of these stances are unhelpful in engaging the society. They have failed in their efforts to change the world.

Hunter offers a new possibility in his third essay on the theology of faithful presence. The key argument in this thesis is that “God’s word was enacted in a particular place and time in history.”²³ In this incarnational theology, Hunter explicitly presents four attributes of God’s faithful presence to us: God pursues us, he identifies with us, he offers us life, and he loves us sacrificially.²⁴ As God demonstrates his faithful presence to Christians, we are called to do the same to each other and to outsiders. Hunter writes, “Faithful presence requires that Christians be fully present and committed to their tasks.”²⁵ It also means that Christians need to commit themselves in social influence, surrender their agendas to the Lord, “and cultivate the world where God has placed them.”²⁶ Hunter gives many examples of how Christian businessmen, doctors, or other professionals can show their faithful presence among their peers.

This book is a thorough presentation of both secular culture and Christian faith. The misunderstanding of Christian right, left, and neo-Anabaptist reminds readers not to be defensive against secular culture, but rather they are to be relevant to the needs of the world and engage it. St. Christopher’s needs to have a deep understanding of faithful presence. This book calls our church to be ready to engage with the world wherever we

²² Hunter, *To Change the World*, 213-219.

²³ Ibid., 240.

²⁴ Ibid., 242.

²⁵ Ibid., 246.

²⁶ Ibid., 247 and 253.

are, just as God did through Jesus Christ. The examples given at the end of the book show how Christians can really live out their faith with faithful presence.

One limitation is that this book lacks discussion regarding our need to depend on the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who calls Christians to witness in the world and history has shown that Christians made many mistakes. As a result, Christian community should learn how to discern the Spirit as a community. A discerning process in a community not only affirms each individual's callings, but also the calling from the neighborhood. This book will help St. Christopher's to exploring faithful presence more deeply.

Challenges Facing Canadian Chinese Ministry

As an ethnic congregation in North America, St. Christopher's faces challenges similar to other Chinese Canadian churches. Cultural and language barriers exist between the first generation and the mainstream, and with the second and third generations. Despite these obstacles, ethnic churches learn more about oneness in Christ and unity in diversity. The two books discussed here consider specific challenges facing the twenty-first century Chinese congregations in North America and particularly in Canada.

到位的教會: 兩文三語教會發展軌跡的一個參考

Positioning Church: A Reference of a Way to Develop Three Dialects and Two Languages Church, by 王乃基 Johnny Wong

Johnny Wong wrote *Positioning Church* to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of Edmonton Christian Community Church (hereafter, ECCC). In the extremely cold city of Edmonton, where temperature can consistently be below twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit, people are reluctant to leave their homes. However, ECCC continues to be a

gathering church, serving over a thousand worshippers, and providing Cantonese, English, and Mandarin services. Wong states the thesis of this book as follows: “教會是為使命存在 ... 教會是必須有凝聚力 – 將福音的果子集結成壘，使大家因不同的恩賜各司其職。”²⁷ Wong has a strong understanding of the mission of ECCC. He desires to turn all believers into useful instruments of God. Though people come and go, the Church has a role to gather, worship, equip, and send Christians out of the world to bless others.

Wong defines “positioning” as “原位的反省與信念.”²⁸ He uses eight different positioning aspects to reflect on his belief in Canadian Chinese ecclesiology, including knowing where you are (the narrative story), knowing how to engage, knowing when to strengthen your ministry in various ways, knowing when to change, knowing the limitations, changing positions if necessary, calling the next generation to full-time ministry, and equipping the saints. In addition, Wong also champions three characteristics in Chinese ecclesiology: the high mobility of membership; three languages—Cantonese, English, and Mandarin—in one church; and a multi-pastoral staff to support this unique structure.²⁹ The church structure and staff support at ECCC continue to evolve as the congregation keeps on growing.

²⁷ Johnny Wong, 王乃基 *Positioning Church: A Way to Develop Three Dialects and Two Languages in Church 到位的教會: 兩文三語教會發展軌跡的一個參考* (Edmonton, ALB: High Speed Printing, 2013), I.33. The English translation of the quote is as follows: “Church is for mission. . . . A church must have gathering power to turn the fruit of the gospel into strongholds.” When quotations are given in another language, a direct translation in English is provided to aid the reader.

²⁸ Wong, *Positioning Church*, 76. The English translation is as follows: “being in a position of reflection and faith.”

²⁹ Unlike ECCC, St. Christopher’s has not started a Mandarin ministry, even though many Chinese churches in the neighborhood have already launched this venture. St. Christopher’s sees the trend, but the church is not prepared to spread its resources, fearing they will become too thin.

In the visioning section, Wong insists that church ministry should not be led by the demands of the market, but by mission and pastoral care.³⁰ Wong suggests it is time to create a mentorship program to enrich, empower, and engage this generation for tomorrow's Church. He concludes that today's congregations need to discern the Spirit in this changing world, to identify the current situation, and to change positions accordingly.³¹

In this well documented work, Wong portrays clearly the challenges facing Canadian Chinese churches, and many of these resonate at St. Christopher's. The theology of positioning in his book reminds St. Christopher's that the congregation must know where the church is and where it is going. Being missional is not simply about reaching out to the community; it also includes internal structural and human resource coordination to support the mission. St. Christopher's can be very fluid in terms of people's mobility and church attendance. In light of this, church leaders need to be ready to change according to the situation. ECCC is a very Evangelical church, and church mission and church growth were part of the inception of the congregation when it was planted. Although St. Christopher's was founded as a church plant with a similar mission to reach more Chinese, the long tradition in Chinese Anglican churches of "minding our own business" and the lack of passionate spirituality hinders the members of St. Christopher's from reaching out.

One limitation of Wong's book is that *Positioning Church* does not address the steps of transformation from a traditional church to an Evangelical, spirit-filled parish.

³⁰ Wong, *Positioning Church*, 148.

³¹ Ibid., 196.

This type of practical application would be helpful. Nevertheless, the fact that ECCC has grown so much against all odds is an encouragement to St. Christopher's to trust God's calling and tackle any challenges.

從飄泊到植根：北美華人教會采風錄
Been Adrift, Now Rooted: A Short History of the North American Chinese Church,
by 邱清萍 Cecilia Yau

Cecilia Yau published *Been Adrift, Now Rooted: A Short History of the North American Chinese Church* in 2010 to record the important history of Chinese ministry in North America. When she saw a generation of pastors who had retired or passed away, she wanted to document the roots of Chinese ministry in America and in Canada, in order to serve as a reminder and a source of encouragement to the next generation. The thesis of this book is as follows: “嘗試描繪華人教會在美國的成長路，這條路與另兩條路一同延伸，一條是中國的國情，另一條是美國的移民史。”³² The development of Chinese Churches in America demonstrates an inseparable connection between the political stability in China and the treatment immigrants received in this foreign land.

There are two parts in this book. The first highlights the mentality of Chinese immigrants and the history of Chinese churches. Yau divides the history of Chinese immigrants to America into three stages. The first stage is from the early nineteenth century to 1882. Under the rule of the Ching Dynasty, many Chinese suffered greatly due to persecution in China. Hearing rumours about gold in the Sacramento area, many

³² Cecilia Yau, 邱清萍 *Been Adrift, Now Rooted: A Short History of the North American Chinese Church 從飄泊到植根：北美華人教會采風錄* (Petaluma, CA: CCM Publishers, 2010), 11. The English translation is as follows: “To try to paint a picture of the growing process of Chinese churches in the United States, two paths appear. One is the path of the churches tied to China. Another path is the immigration history of Chinese Americans.”

men left China in search of fortune and better lives for their families. However, once in California, they found themselves treated like slaves and they were not allowed to go home. American missionaries who came back from China began their mission to these foreign Chinese workers through local churches and denominations.

The second phase of early Chinese immigrants arrived between 1882 and 1943. During this era, the US Congress passed numerous laws which discriminated against the Chinese, preventing reunion with their families, marriages with locals, and American citizenship. During that period, Dr. Sun Yat Sen had begun his revolution in Hawaii and was preparing to overturn the Ching Dynasty, and many Chinese immigrants were eager to return to China. By that time, there were six Chinese churches and more than sixty Caucasian congregations with Chinese ministries in America.³³ Chinese churches became political centres to plan and support Sun's revolt in China.

The third phase of Chinese immigration was from 1943 until 1980.³⁴ The Second World War united China and the United States, as they became allies in the fight against one common enemy, Japan. The wife of President Chiang Kai-Shek, first lady Soong Mei Ling, delivered an inspiring speech in Los Angeles and also at the White House in 1943. Her speech led to an attitudinal change in American politics, and eventually the apartheid against Chinese was abolished.³⁵ After the Second World War, the United States was in great need of highly skilled workers, hence the door was opened for many Chinese to become US citizens. Chinese Christians gradually increased in number, first

³³ Yau, *Been Adrift, Now Rooted*, 12.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

belonging to Bible study groups on university campuses and later founding non-denominational congregations. Chinese Christian organizations also took shape in the 1960s to support campus student movements and churches.

In the second half of the book, Yau provides biographies of sixteen important Chinese American or Chinese Canadian pastors who “不但是塑造歷史的人，也是被歷史塑造的人。”³⁶ All of them came to North America in the 1950s and 1970s, and they served in churches, Christian organizations, as missionaries, in Christian publishing and in other theological capacities. Through these biographies, readers gain a clear and comprehensive picture of the Chinese ministry in North America.³⁷ All of the pastors highlighted came from either Evangelical or fundamentalist backgrounds. They were all hard workers in mission, church planting, and developing missional supports to churches and Bible groups through various Christian organizations.

This book highlights the fact that no political turmoil could stop God’s mission by these early Christian missionaries, and that the power of the Holy Spirit continued his work in times of uncertainty. Chinese immigrants came to Canada also because of the political uncertainty in Hong Kong and China. As this book describes, churches and pastors ought to respond to the needs of the people and demonstrate passion, perseverance, faith, courage, and spiritual maturity to reach people, equip the saints, and plant churches. The unfailing conviction of the previous generation of pastors is an encouragement to today’s clergy.

³⁶ Yau, *Been Adrift, Now Rooted*, 12. The English translation is as follows: “were not only shaped history, but were also moulded by history.”

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

One limitation of the book is that due to the fact that Yau is from an Evangelical background, her sources and writings are limited to a conservative, fundamentalist perspective. The work of the liberal and mainstream denominations are only mentioned but not expounded, and there was no mention of any Episcopal or Anglican ministries in this book. Yau also admits her experience and hence her material is primarily restricted to the West Coast of the United States where she resides.³⁸

The Art of Building Relationships

As Christians try to be missional in their local context, they first need to build relationships with neighbors. In today's culture, Christians are afraid of being labeled as judgemental or disrespectful when they try to share the gospel with non-Christians. Many Christians do not know how to witness to the Lord and consequently keep the faith to themselves. The two recently published books presented in this section provide much-needed understanding regarding how Christians can reach out to their communities from a faithful presence perspective.

The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community, by Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen

Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight Friesen come from three different denominations, from different neighborhoods in Seattle and Tacoma areas, and they have different ministry challenges. Their common interest lies in being missional in their own neighborhoods, building relationships within local communities. They write this book with the following purpose: "The local church is a body that bears witness to this way of

³⁸ Yau, *Been Adrift, Now Rooted*, 13.

becoming human in Christ, through both manifesting that growing reality of our lives together and becoming those who see and proclaim the signs of this work happening in the people and places around us.”³⁹ The authors use four propositions to describe the church as the church “in” a geographical city in the early Church, “of” an empire to develop Christendom in the Middle Ages, “for” mission in colonialism era, and “with” those they target in the twentieth century.⁴⁰ The authors propose a new parish “within” the context and “in” collaboration “with” other churches.⁴¹

Instead of creating a new denomination, the authors ask Christians to have faithful presence. Faithful presence means that “in each situation we are listening for what our relationships require of us and responding according to our capacity.”⁴² One of the examples given is Martha Rollins, founder of the Boaz and Ruth community.⁴³ Rollins used her furniture-restoring skills to train ex-convicts and help them find jobs. The whole neighborhood in which she lived was gradually transformed. The authors urge readers to stop depending on techniques or quick-fixes, and instead work to deepen our spirituality to show forth faithful presence.

The authors also present the ecclesiology of “the new parish,” which puts faithful presence (worship) in the center, surrounded by mission, community (fellowship), and formation (discipleship). The new parish should also find the new commonalities within

³⁹ Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J. Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 17.

⁴⁰ Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 45.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 59.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 54.

the community, that is, the concerns or practical matters the parish and the community all share. In practice, the authors suggest that readers must exercise presence in order to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit, and in order to get to know and love the local community. In addition, local churches should also link, connect, and partner with other organizations and churches, and lead parishioners to live lives worth following.

This hands-on book provides St. Christopher's with the opportunity to visualize what a missional church looks like. It begins from within by living out a faithful presence. A deep relationship with God helps us reveal God's presence wherever we are. Being a missional church is not simply about bringing people to Christ, but about listening to God's voice, our own stories, and the stories of our community. Faithful presence also demonstrates the church ecclesiology of having mission, community, and formation in the midst of worship. In order to grow and change, like lobsters shedding the exoskeleton, St. Christopher's needs to let go of the old methodology of doing ministry and reconnect with the local community.

The limitations of *The New Parish* are identifying the work of the Spirit in our community and a way of joining in. As there are many needs in a community and a church cannot meet all needs, then the church needs to determine what the Spirit is leading the parish to be involved in. The discernment is a challenge, and a parish must decide how to determine whether or not to participate in a particular community project. These types of questions are not addressed in the book.

The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door,
by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon

The Art of Neighboring is another practical book about living out missional theology and building genuine relationships with our neighbors. The purpose of this book is to provide “practical advice on how to be intentional about living out the Great Commandment.”⁴⁴ Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon first identify who our neighbor is. Jesus summarizes the great commandment as “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37-39). There is a reason why God puts us where we live, and we should be intentional in getting to know our neighbors.

Many people feel that a lack of time hinders them from reaching out to their neighbors. The authors suggest “three life-balancing principles that will help [us] do just that: (1) make the main thing the main thing, (2) eliminate time stealers, and (3) be interruptible.”⁴⁵ Another obstacle that stops us from meeting our neighbors is the fear factor. The authors caution, “Fear has a way of distorting our perspective.”⁴⁶ Many Christians are afraid to have conflicts with others and fear hinders us to reach out to others. The authors affirm that God is with us and gives us courage. We need not fear; we need simply learn to be our neighbors’ neighbors.

⁴⁴ Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon, *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 2012), 10.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 66.

Christians should begin by taking straightforward steps in meeting our neighbors; first we could begin by learning their names and backgrounds. Then we can consider what God wants us to do in our neighborhood. It is important that we do not meet our neighbors with a purpose of evangelizing them. The authors write, “We don’t love our neighbors to convert them; we love our neighbors because we are converted.”⁴⁷ As Christians, we will bring forth our faithful presence in our conversation. When sharing the good and bad parts of our life stories, strong relationships will be established with our neighbors.⁴⁸ Pathak and Runyon discuss four acts of neighboring: receiving, setting boundaries, focusing, and creating a community of love and action.⁴⁹

For the purposes of this project, *The New Parish* and *The Art of Neighboring* serve as practical reference books for St. Christopher’s as members reach out to meet their neighbors. *The Art of Neighboring* is particularly helpful in identifying excuses most people use to prevent knowing their neighbors. It is possible to overcome these obstacles, which in large part are spiritual concerns. Some people are concerned about how much is too much with respect to helping others. The art of setting boundaries is very useful for Christians to learn, making us feel at ease in assisting others without putting a strain on our daily lives. This book also provides signs to identify when one is feeling overwhelmed and when the relationship is not going well.

The Art of Neighboring has limitations in light of this research project. If a parish encourages church members to meet and love their neighbors, then the next step for the

⁴⁷ Pathak and Runyon, *The Art of Neighboring*, 102.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 108.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 153-154.

church is not stated. After encouraging parishioners to love their neighbors, the home church may consider inviting the neighbors to a church service or event. It would also be helpful to have a description of how faithful presence is engaged once the relationship with neighbors begins to take shape. Jesus calls Christians to be witnesses, and all believers should be ready to witness when opportunity arises.

Conclusion

This concludes the seven relevant literature reviews on the subject of being missional in local community. This chapter has presented the essence of missional church, the challenges facing Canadian Chinese ministry, and the art of building relationships. The next chapter explores the practice of incarnational missiology.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRACTICE OF INCARNATIONAL MISSIOLOGY

Chapter 3 presents the missional theology of loving our neighbors. First, the historical and contemporary theology among Anglican Evangelicals is explored. The chapter then focuses on the theology of *missio Dei*, presented in three parts: the role of the triune God in drawing people to himself; the gospel and culture; and the characteristics of missional congregations in context. Finally, the last section describes scriptural insights regarding putting down roots in our communities by loving our neighbors.

The Anglican Tradition

The worldwide Anglican Communion consists of many different traditions and worship styles. It ranges from a strong emphasis on liturgy (high church) to a lesser emphasis on ceremonial worship (low church), and from charismatic to liberal theology. Within these different styles of Anglican traditions, worshippers who stress biblical teaching, preaching, and small group ministry are known as Evangelicals. They uphold the authority of the Bible, interpreting the Scripture based on the historical, political, and cultural backgrounds of the texts. They pay attention to confession and absolution, God's

salvation, and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This section studies the rise of Anglican Evangelicalism and its key attributes, the movement's relationship with the Bible and with social services, and the five marks of mission in the twenty-first century. This study covers the span of Anglican history from the 1750s to 2010.

Anglican Evangelicalism: History and Key Attributes

The Anglican Evangelical movement did not begin with the Anglican Church. The rise of Anglican Evangelicalism dates to the Reformation, when Martin Luther and John Calvin campaigned for the justification of faith alone. Nigel Scotland states in his book, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age: 1789-1901*, "The Evangelicals followed Luther and went back to the Scripture alone as the only source of authority."¹ However, the early English Evangelical "awakeners" were not active until the mid-eighteenth century, during which "bribery, gambling, drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, abduction, political corruption, business chicanery, robbery, were only the more obvious types of moral depravity."²

Scotland describes Anglican Evangelicalism as "personal and experiential, and following Wesley, it emphasized the inward work of the Holy Spirit in achieving new birth in the believer's life and giving assurance of salvation."³ The key theological beliefs of these awakeners were universal sin, atonement by the grace of God through

¹ Nigel Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age: 1789-1901* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2003), 3.

² Alexander Clinton Zabriskie, "The Rise and Major Characteristics of Anglican Evangelicalism," in *Anglican Evangelicalism*, ed. Alexander Zabriskie (Philadelphia: The Church Historical Society, 1943), 6.

³ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 5.

Jesus Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. These convictions instilled in them a strong sense of urgency in bringing the gospel to others.

Based on the Evangelicals' strong passion for the gospel, Alexander Clinton Zabriskie, in his book, *Anglican Evangelicalism*, cites four praxis that they frequently used to convey their beliefs in ministry.⁴ The first praxis was preaching. The Evangelical clergymen preached with passion and conviction, and their intent was to teach their listeners about the salvation of Jesus and to help them understand the Scripture. A second practice was the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and a third was pastoral visitation. Zabriskie states that the fourth common practice was "the use of small groups."⁵ Parishioners were encouraged to join weekly classes or small groups to study the Scripture, to pray for each other, and for fellowship. These practices demonstrated their excitement for the gospel and their eager resolution to equip more people for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Anglican Evangelicals greatly emphasized the study of the Scripture, time for personal devotion, and Holy Communion. Evangelicals viewed the Scripture as God's divine inspiration and authority. As a result, Anglican Evangelicals shifted their emphasis from the Reformers' doctrinal movement in the sixteenth century to the biblical movement in the seventeenth century. This shift changed the focus in church ministry, as well as the private devotional lives of Anglicans.⁶ They sought the Bible for preaching inspiration and guidance for themselves and others. When they read the Scripture, they

⁴ Zabriskie, "The Rise and Major Characteristics," 6.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Stanley Brown-Serman, "The Evangelicals and the Bible," in Zabriskie, *Anglican Evangelicalism*, 81.

searched for a religious experience from reading the text to encounter the presence of God. Bible reading was not simply about intellectual knowledge, but a spiritual engagement with the Holy Spirit. Evangelical clergymen not only read their Bibles every day, but they encouraged others to read the Bible as well; instead of having one Bible for every village, they wanted one Bible for every family.⁷ The biblical movement quietly began to transform England, and then it spread to North America, influencing educational, social, and moral attitudes.

In the later part of the eighteenth century, Charles Simeon introduced a more balanced view of reading the Scripture. In the argument over predestination, Simeon insisted that neither the Arminian view nor the Calvinist view should be taken on its own, but that both views should be upheld to create “the dialectic nature of Scripture.”⁸ Simeon’s biblical theology of holding two extremes created a more tolerant view within the same church. He wrote, “It is only as we learn to accept both as true and recognize that the Bible does not allow our compact systematizations that we come to terms with Scripture and discover its genius.”⁹ In other words, Christians need two different views at the same time to assist us in seeing more clearly the truth of the Scripture.

Alongside a focus on Scripture was a focus on personal devotion. Like any English Evangelicals, both John Wesley and Charles Simeon woke up early every day to study their Bibles diligently. Other Evangelicals, including those from the “Clapham

⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁸ Ibid., 97.

⁹ Charles Simeon, as quoted in Brown-Serman, “The Evangelicals and the Bible,” 97.

sect,” were also early risers who spent time with the Lord before dawn.¹⁰ Reading the Bible and praying go together. Ryle was convinced that “converted people always pray.”¹¹ In many Evangelical households, it was quite habitual to see family devotion. Family members gathered to sing hymns, to read the Scripture, to read other devotional books, and to pray as a family. Some did so in the morning, others at night, and some families even held devotions both morning and night.¹²

In addition to preaching and teaching, celebrating the Holy Communion at worship was equally important to early Evangelicals. There were times that Holy Eucharist was only celebrated four times a year in many parts of England. However, Charles Simeon, members of the Clapham sect, and several Evangelical bishops pushed for communion to be served more regularly.¹³

The Evangelical Commitment to Mission

Evangelicals are serious about their faith and it is their obligation to put their faith into action. Their missions could be grouped into two main streams: evangelism and social justice. In the beginning of the Evangelical movement, between 1736 and 1760, mission to Evangelicals only meant bringing the gospel to all people as commanded by

¹⁰ Scotland writes, “The Clapham Sect were a small group of [Evangelical] upper class influential laymen and lay women who congregated in Clapham in the late eighteenth century.” Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 28.

¹¹ J. C. Ryle, *Practical Religion* (New York: T. Crowell, 1959), 66, as quoted in Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 28.

¹² Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 347-348.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 352.

Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).¹⁴ However, when they discovered that there was injustice among the poor, factory workers, and homeless children to whom they were ministering, they began fighting for social justice in their communities.

As Evangelicals focused their mission on evangelism, they saw the world, both locally and globally, as their mission field. John Wesley declared that “‘the world is my parish’ and prompted by his Arminian theology, urged his helpers to go to every corner of the globe to insist ‘you must be born again.’”¹⁵ One of the great efforts by Evangelicals was to establish Church Missionary Society in 1799, which became the largest missionary society in the world.¹⁶ There were also other societies serving specific groups, such as the London Jews’ Society for the conversion of Jews and the Colonial and Continental Chaplains’ Society to support English expatriates living outside of England. There were also the “Prayer Book Society to distribute prayer books” and the Bible Society to make Scriptures available in different languages for people around the world.¹⁷

One of the beneficiaries of the evangelistic efforts described above was the Anglican Church in China and Hong Kong. A year after Hong Kong became a British colony, Vincent Stanton was appointed as the first colonial chaplain in 1843. Later on, the Church Missionary Society sent many missionaries and bishops to Hong Kong to

¹⁴ I. C. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on Victorians* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976), 15, as quoted in Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 5.

¹⁵ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 24.

¹⁶ Zabriskie, “The Rise and Major Characteristics,” 15.

¹⁷ Ibid.

establish churches, schools, and social services for the local poor.¹⁸ Some members of St. Christopher's are the fruit of the English Evangelicals' missional efforts in the nineteenth century.

In addition to these high-profile missionary works, the English Evangelicals also focused on some local ministries. One of the first Sunday schools was started by Robert Raikes in 1780, and almost immediately the Sunday School Society was founded to promote public religious education to the poor.¹⁹ The journal of William Wilberforce reveals the Evangelicals' plans to reach out to their secular friends. There were also small groups, prayer groups, and evening religious lectures in local parishes. Moreover, hymn singing and singing the canticles and psalms, which were once limited to cathedrals and college chapels, were made available by the Evangelicals to neighborhood churches.²⁰

As the Evangelicals shared the gospel with the locals, they discovered that there were tremendous needs among the poor and the working class. In 1774 John Wesley began speaking against the inhumane practice of slavery, and Wilberforce, a member of the Clapham sect, spearheaded the abolition of slavery in the English Parliament. Wilberforce's efforts brought forth the final abolition of slavery in 1833 throughout the British Empire.²¹ Other concerns raised by the Clapham sect within England were the so-

¹⁸ Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, "History of the Province," Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui: The Hong Kong Anglican Church (Episcopal), <http://www.hkskh.org/content.aspx?id=12&lang=1> (accessed August 21, 2015).

¹⁹ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 34.

²⁰ Zabriskie, "The Rise and Major Characteristics," 16.

²¹ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans*, 30, 32.

called “white slaves,” who were child labourers in factories and as chimney sweeps, working long hours in poor conditions. The efforts of the Evangelicals led to the full implementation of the Factory Act in 1818 to protect children and workers.²²

These early Evangelicals felt called to preach the gospel to all and at the same time to serve the poor and outcasts. Their examples serve as good reminders for us today of what it means to be missional. Not only should we proclaim the good news, but we should also tend to the disadvantaged in our communities.

The Five Marks of Mission

The mission of evangelizing the world and fighting for social justice continue in the twentieth-century Anglicanism. The Five Marks of Mission were first proposed in 1984 and finalized in 2012 by the Anglican Consultative Council, with the intent to generate a common commitment to understand God’s mission in the world for the Anglican Communion.²³ These five marks have not only been widely adopted by the Anglican Communion, they have also been adopted by many other denominations in the world.

The first mark of mission is “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.” When Jesus first ministered, his first words were, “the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:15). However, when Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God, he also referred to himself (Luke 11:20). The Kingdom is here but not yet complete. Hence, “our mission is to call people to enter the Kingdom here and now

²² Ibid., 33.

²³ Anglican Communion, “Marks of Mission,” Anglican Communion, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx> (accessed August 24, 2015).

but to await fulfillment in the future.”²⁴ To be more effective in proclaiming the gospel in the twenty-first century, Christians should seek to understand the circumstances of our target audience. It is essential to first build a trusting relationship with them, and then we can start to genuinely care for their physical and emotional needs. Only then will they become more receptive when we share with them the good news of Jesus Christ.²⁵

The second mark is “to teach, baptize, and nurture new believers.”²⁶ In his final commission to the Church, Jesus commanded, “Teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). Christian education is a crucial praxis of the Church. Since the beginning of the early Church, new believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). The ultimate goal of the Christian journey is to be like Christ. A good Christian education program, such as adult and children’s Sunday school, devotional materials, small groups, public religious lectures, and leadership development are encouraged and offered in many local parishes.

The next three marks of mission urge the Church to look beyond itself and to take action for the needy and those who are victims of injustice, and to care for all of creation. The third mark is “to respond to human need by loving service.”²⁷ Jesus summarized his greatest teaching or commandment as being to love the Lord with all that we have and to

²⁴ Ken Gnanakan, “To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (i),” in *Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, eds. Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 5.

²⁵ D. Zac Niringige, “To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (ii),” in Walls and Ross, *Mission in the 21st Century*, 21-22.

²⁶ Anglican Communion, “Marks of Mission.”

²⁷ Ibid.

love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-38; Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18).

To love God is to love our neighbor. Through the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus explained that our neighbours are not limited to those who live next to us. Our neighbour is anyone in need, and Christians ought to respond to their needs regardless of race and religion. This affirms what the English Evangelicals did in the eighteenth century by including both evangelism and “love in action” activities, such as serving the poor, providing education, and fighting against injustice in society.

With respect to world injustice, the fourth mark of mission advocates the Church to act and restore justice in this unjust human society. It is “to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation.”²⁸

In the book of Exodus, God spoke to Moses to demonstrate his compassion for his people who had been enslaved: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:7-8).

Valdir R. Steuernagel describes God’s incarnational theology with the following statement: “God lives out identification for liberation as an experience of justice.”²⁹

Moreover, Paul reminds Christians that there are evil spiritual forces in the world which Christians should fight against. As in Ephesians 6:12, Paul states, “For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Valdir R. Steuernagel, “To Seek to Transform Unjust Structures of Society (i),” in Walls and Ross, *Mission in the 21st Century*, 70.

of evil in the heavenly places.” Hence, it is the role of the Church to denounce injustice that “produces oppression, exploitation, suffering, and idolatry.”³⁰ This mark of mission calls the Church to act in today’s refugee crisis in the Middle East, Europe, and Africa. It also urges us to respond globally and locally to the needs of the poor and underprivileged. Bringing the good news of Jesus must go hand in hand with securing justice for the unfortunate.

The fifth and final mark of mission is “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”³¹ This mark calls the Church to be a responsible steward of God’s creation as the Lord commanded humankind: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). God has dominion over the world with love and compassion. Likewise, humankind should have a similar kind of passion when we care for the world. Unfortunately, we have damaged and exploited God’s creation as a result of industrialism, trade, overpopulation, excessive food consumption, deforestation, pollution, and habitat destruction, and these have caused loss of farmland, global warming, and the endangering and extinction of species, among other negative effects.³² The Church must take on a leadership role in calling for the preservation of the environment and better stewardship of God’s creation.

³⁰ Ibid., 69.

³¹ Anglican Communion, “Marks of Mission.”

³² Calvin B. DeWitt, “To Strive to Safeguard the Integrity of Creation and Sustain and Renew the Life of the Earth (i),” in Walls and Ross, *Mission in the 21st Century*, 86-87.

The Chinese Evangelical Tradition

To compare the Anglican Evangelical tradition to St. Christopher's, the Chinese Evangelicals would be the closest Christian cousin. About one third of the parishioners of St. Christopher's come from a Chinese Evangelical background. Many of the remaining two thirds have friends and family members from a Chinese Evangelical background as well. Moreover, due to the limited Chinese Anglican resources in North America, the parish heavily relies on materials from the Evangelical Church, including books, Christian hymns, preachers, pastors, and other discipleship training tools. Consequently, St. Christopher's needs to choose which theologies within the larger Evangelical tradition are compatible with the Anglican practice and which are not.

The Chinese Evangelical movement was started by three Chinese evangelists back in the early twentieth century. They were Ming-Dao Wang 王明道 (1900-1991), David Yang 楊紹唐 (1898-1966), and Watchman Nee 倪柝聲 (1902-1962). None of them came from any mainstream denomination. In fact, they promoted independent churches to distance Chinese churches from the Western influence, which reflected the political climate in China during the first half of the twentieth century in.³³ As a result, instead of treating Christianity as a foreign religion, they tried to contextualize the gospel to the locals and to make the salvation of God more appealing to the Chinese.

Regardless of the number in attendance, Wang was passionate in evangelistic preaching to invite people to accept Jesus as Lord and savior. On the other hand, Yang and Nee focused their ministries on discipleship. Unlike Western missionaries, they tried

³³ Leslie Lyall, *Three of China's Mighty Men* 中國教會三巨人, trans. M. Chan Kai Yu 陳楷瑜等譯, 4th ed. (Taipei: Olive Christian Foundation, 1992), 88.

to use Chinese teaching methods to equip the parishioners.³⁴ Nee and Wang were prolific writers; they wrote over fifty and thirty books respectively. Wang's suffering theology was particularly well received by many Chinese Christians as they went through persecution from the Communist party in the 1950s to 1960s. Yang was a local pastor for thirteen churches and planted another thirty-eight parishes. He later also started a seminary to equip missionaries and pastors.³⁵ Wang, Yang, and Nee continue to greatly influence Chinese Evangelicals even today.

Evangelicals are very passionate about their faith. Similar to Anglican Evangelicals, they have their daily personal devotions and have many Bible study groups in churches. They emphasize discipleship for new believers and for all believers through adult Sunday school. They have an annual mission month to call people to become missionaries for short-term or long-term assignments for both local and overseas ministries. Chinese Evangelicals believe that those who do not believe in Jesus will spend eternity in hell. They stress a personal relationship with Jesus and personal salvation through Christ alone. Since babies and children cannot make their own decisions, Evangelicals do not allow baptism of infants and young children.

Chinese Anglicans greatly appreciate the Evangelicals' passion in evangelism, discipleship training, church planting work, and sending missionaries. However, Chinese Anglicans find the Evangelical practice too judgemental and forceful. Anglicans believe that it is by God's grace and love that people are saved. It is not simply by personal

³⁴ Limao Zheng 李茂政, *Exemplars of the Past 典型在夙昔* (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary 中華福音神學院, 1990), 213-214.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 210-211.

commitment to Christ alone. In other words, when one refuses to accept Jesus, Anglicans would not say that person is going to hell. Instead, they would say that God has his timing and people have their own choices. Whether a person spends eternity in hell or not is not the business of believers, but the business of God. Anglican Evangelicals prefer to emphasize God's love rather than God's judgement. Therefore as the early Church Christians baptised as a family (Acts 16:31-34), Anglicans encourage baptism of infants and young children.

Another difference between Anglican Evangelicals and Chinese Evangelicals is that Chinese Evangelicals have not responded to social justice issues facing their community until very recently. Only during the past few years, as local governments in North America have begun to legalize same sex marriage, have Chinese Evangelicals become active in social matters. Historically, though, when people are hungry or suffer from poor working conditions, Chinese Evangelicals have not gotten involved. They see their role as preaching the gospel, not solving problems in society. This phenomenon is also common among Chinese Anglicans, and it is likely due to the Chinese cultural mentality that people should mind their own business. Therefore, the missional theology of God, where God is at work outside of the Church, is absolutely foreign to Chinese Evangelicals and to some extent to Chinese Anglicans as well. As this project seeks to bring missional theology to the forefront at St. Christopher's, a Chinese Anglican church with some ties to Chinese Evangelicalism, it is important to lay a foundation by exploring the theology of the *missio Dei*.

The *Missio Dei*

According to the Bible, it was the Lord who has always taken the initiative to seek people (Genesis 3:8-9; 12:1; 45:5; Exodus 3:2; 1 Samuel 3:4; Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 9:4). Likewise, as the instrument of the Kingdom of God, the Church should embrace a new theology and understand that it is not Christians who bring forth the Kingdom of God, but rather the work of God already present in the neighborhood. It is important to remember that “it is not the Church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission who has a Church in the world.”³⁶ This section expounds the theology of the missional church in three areas: the mission of the Trinitarian God, the gospel and culture, and the characteristics of missional congregations in context.

The Mission of the Trinitarian God

In the beginning of the Gospel of John, readers learn that through the Word, “all things came into being” (John 1:3). Then in John 3:17, the author writes, “God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” God loves the world and sent his son to die for our sins. Jesus elaborated, “No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (John 3:5). It is clear that all three persons of the Trinity are involved in the mission to save humanity and the world. As stated in a publication of the Church of England, “[The]

³⁶ Tim Dearborn, *Beyond Duty: A Passion for Christ, a Heart for Mission* (MARC, 1998), 85, as quoted in Archbishop’s Council on Mission and Public Affairs, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context* (London: Church House, 2004), 85.

Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, who mutually indwell one another, exist in one another for one another, in interdependent giving and receiving.”³⁷

The Lord asked Abram to leave his country and his kin to travel to a promised land where God would make him a great nation (Genesis 12:1-2). In this place, the Lord became “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6). The Lord also called Moses to deliver his people as God had heard their cry of suffering in the land of Egypt (Exodus 3). All through the Old Testament, God continued to call upon spiritual leaders, judges, prophets, and kings to lead the Israelites. God the Father has a mission to reach out to his people to reconcile them to him. In their book, *Introducing the Missional Church*, Alan Roxburgh and Scott Boren state, “God sent himself; he is his own missionary. He came to open the door for the restoration of all creation.”³⁸ He is the loving God who has always been seeking his children.

The second member of the Trinity is Jesus. God came down from heaven in Christ and became like us. The incarnation of Jesus demonstrates the commitment of God’s mission. He came to let people know he understands and experiences what we have gone through in life. God the Son identified himself as one of us. Using human language and local circumstance, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God and embodied the presence of the kingdom of God in his own person.³⁹ As a result, when Jesus

³⁷ Church of England, *Eucharistic Presidency* (Church House Publishing, 1997), 2.6, as quoted in Archbishop’s Council on Mission and Public Affairs, *Mission-Shaped Church*, 85.

³⁸ Alan J. Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What It Is, Why It Matters, How to Become One* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 94.

³⁹ Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, 41.

preached about the kingdom of God, he was speaking about himself, his reign, and also the anointed one.

When John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask whether Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus used the words prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 42:7; 61:1), saying, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me” (Matthew 11:4-6).⁴⁰ The reign of God is about salvation and judgement. Later, when Jesus sent his disciples to proclaim the good news, he also asked them to “cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, [and] cast out demons” (Matthew 10:9). In his earthly ministry, Jesus used parables, taught, and performed miracles to explain what the kingdom of God is like.

Jesus also died on the cross and three days later he was raised from the dead. His resurrection manifested his power over sin, as the Apostle Paul writes, “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:56-57). Through Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we “might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). But believing in Jesus is not only about having a new life in Christ; we are also called to be a sent community. On the first day of Jesus’ resurrection, he appeared before his disciples and commissioned them, “‘As the father has sent me, so I send you.’ When he said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (John 20:21-23). In this sent community, Jesus sent forth his Church to proclaim the kingdom of God

⁴⁰ Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, 41.

with the forgiveness of sins. God's mission, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, completed the work of atonement. God's chosen people are not limited to being the bearers of his blessing as in the Old Testament, but we are also to be the witnesses of his kingdom in all corners of the earth.⁴¹

The third person of the Trinity, God the Spirit, also plays an essential role in the *missio Dei*. Newbigin asserts that "the Spirit of the Lord (*ruach Yahweh*) is the very life of the Lord himself put forth to give life and power, wisdom and speech, knowledge and understanding to humans. It is the living, mighty, self-communicating presence of God himself."⁴² The Holy Spirit is the very essence of God. Before Jesus' resurrection, he had explained numerous times to his disciples about the Holy Spirit, who would teach them everything and remind them of things that he had taught them (John 14:26). When Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, he promised his disciples that the power of the Holy Spirit would come upon them and give them strength (Acts 1:8). Jesus' promise came true on the Day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of God came as tongues of fire to give disciples courage and abilities to preach in many local dialects (Acts 2). Newbigin clarifies that "mission is not just church extension. . . . It is the action of the Holy Spirit, who in his sovereign freedom both convicts the world (John 16:8-11) and leads the church towards the fullness of the truth that it has not yet grasped (John 16:12-15)."⁴³

The Spirit of God will lead the Church to accomplish the mission of salvation to the end of the world. The Apostle Paul explains how the Holy Spirit works when he

⁴¹ Ibid., 32. This theology is based upon Acts 1:8.

⁴² Ibid., 57.

⁴³ Ibid., 59.

writes, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin of death” (Romans 8:2). The Spirit gives life to those who are in Christ (Romans 8:11). For this reason, the Church should constantly seek the guidance of the Spirit to achieve God’s will through the salvation of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel and Culture

When the triune God has a mission to reconcile with his children, he does it in a cultural context. Likewise, when the Church speaks of mission, one must remember that the gospel is proclaimed in a specific time and place. The Apostle Paul describes the incarnational Christ in Philippians 2:7-8: “[Christ Jesus] emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.” Jesus gave up his glory in heaven and emptied himself to be in a human form.

When Jesus was born in Palestine two thousand years ago, he incarnated into a poor Jewish family, grew up in Nazareth, and preached in the area of Galilee and Jerusalem. The authors of *Mission-Shaped Church* write, “God in Christ entered the world, taking on a specific cultural identity.”⁴⁴ Jesus was right in the middle of his culture, using local language and illustrations to preach, and casting out demons and healing the sick before him. In the same way, Christians are called to live in their communities, “within the local culture, under the lordship of Christ.”⁴⁵ The Apostle Paul understood the importance of intersecting gospel and culture; he writes, “For though I am

⁴⁴ Archbishop’s Council on Mission and Public Affairs, *Mission-Shaped Church*, 87.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. . . . To those outside the law I became as one outside the law . . . so that I might win those outside the law” (1 Corinthians 9:19-21). Paul set an example by humbling himself in order to bring the good news to the local community.

The gospel certainly does not lose its essence when it is immersed into the local culture. Although Jesus lived in a Roman-controlled country under the heavy influence of Jewish religious leaders, he did not conform to all their rules and regulations. On the contrary, he was critical of the misuse and misunderstanding of the Torah’s teaching. When we as Christians respect and understand the culture we are in, it does not mean that we are required to conform to all the values and practices of our society. The authors of *Mission-Shaped Church* write, “A truly incarnational Church is one that imitates, through the Spirit, both Christ’s loving identification with his culture and his costly counter-cultural stance within it.”⁴⁶ Consequently, Christian churches face the challenge of upholding two conditions: being contextual and being faithful to their convictions.

As St. Christopher’s is situated in the suburb of a Canadian cosmopolitan area, the theology of the gospel and the culture plays an essential role in the parish’s contextual praxis. In today’s North American culture, individualism is a deeply imbedded value. From personal computers to individual devices, the consumer culture promotes individualism over community. This trend challenges the traditional Chinese family and community belief as well as the biblical teaching of Christian unity as Christ’s body (1 Corinthians 12). The congregation of St. Christopher’s must acknowledge this tension in

⁴⁶ Ibid.

their own lives and in the community. Through preaching and teaching in small groups, it is hoped that members will learn to seek not what they want but what God wants for their lives.

Another challenge related to gospel and culture is the social climate of multiculturalism. As an immigrant metropolitan area, there are people from all over the world who believe in many different religions. Sharing about faith becomes a personal matter. Imposing one faith over another is considered insensitive and disrespectful. Consequently, most Christians choose not to share their faith in public or even in private. Under such circumstances, Christians find it difficult to live out the Great Commission to bring good news to all corners of the world (Matthew 28:19). This is certainly true at St. Christopher's, and the congregation is encouraged to remember that the Apostle Paul and the early Church also faced a similar situation. Through preaching and teaching, the church endorses the notion that practising faithful presence, loving our neighbors, and following the guidance of the Spirit is the way that twenty-first-century Christians will bring gospel and culture together.

Characteristics of Missional Congregations in Context

As the Holy Spirit founded the Church, Jesus Christ commissioned the sent community, and he bestowed at least four major attributes to be manifested in missional congregations in their circumstances. Various sources draw these out, and this project is particularly indebted to the work of Craig Van Gelder's *The Missional Church in Context*, and Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight Friesen's *The New Parish* for the list of attributes presented here. The four attributes include "reading the context in one's

environment,” “anticipating new insights into the gospel,” “anticipating reciprocity,” and practicing a faithful presence.⁴⁷

Van Gelder points out that first, missional congregations learn to read the context in their environment. In order to engage with the locals, the church must be able to comprehend occurrences in its community. This can easily be done through municipal or demographic statistics, and also researching the social information theologically. This is the time the parish asks, “What is God doing” and “What does he want to do in our neighborhood?”⁴⁸ The next question would be, “How can we join in God’s plan in our community?” In *The New Parish*, the authors recommend the use of a listening skill they call “the narrative braid.” A narrative braid has three strands: one represents God’s story—the story of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ; the second is our personal spiritual story that embodies our own relationship with God; and the last strand is the story of our context.⁴⁹ The three strands form one braid, and all three are equally important in missional listening. Believers must learn to become local theologians in their various contexts.

The second attribute of missional congregations is that they “anticipate new insights into the gospel.”⁵⁰ When a church engages its context, it will discover a new understanding of the gospel, which can be quite different from that to which the parish

⁴⁷ The first three attributes of a missional church are taken from Craig Van Gelder, ed., *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 38-40. The final attribute is taken from Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 58.

⁴⁸ Van Gelder, *The Missional Church in Context*, 39.

⁴⁹ Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 122-123.

⁵⁰ Van Gelder, *The Missional Church in Context*, 39.

has become accustomed. Peter was certainly astonished to learn that even a Gentile like Cornelius would be open to learning about the gospel; after hearing Peter's message, Cornelius was filled by the Spirit even before baptism. This new insight would not have been revealed if Peter had not visited Cornelius's house in Caesarea (Acts 10).

The third attribute of missional congregations is that they "anticipate reciprocity."⁵¹ This anticipation happens when the gospel is brought into a new context and viewed through the new insight, thus enriching church life and theology. The example Van Gelder uses is the expansion of the early Church after the persecution against the Church in Jerusalem. The early Church did not consider spreading the gospel outside of the Palestine area. However, persecution forced Christians to scatter across Asia Minor and other parts of the world. As a result, the gospel was widely spread.

The last attribute of missional congregations in context is faithful presence. When Hunter introduces the concept of faithful presence in his book, *To Change the World*, he presents four ways that God is faithfully present to people: pursuing people, identifying with us, offering his life, and loving us sacrificially.⁵² Similarly, Christians should do the same for one another within the Christian community. If we do not know how to be present faithfully to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we will not know how to do the same to those outside of the Church. God also calls us to serve strangers as ourselves: "The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself" (Leviticus 19:34). Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen write, "[Faithful presence] means that in each situation Christians are listening for what our

⁵¹ Ibid., 40.

⁵² Hunter, *To Change the World*, 241-242.

relationships require of us and responding according to our capacity.”⁵³ As a sent community of Jesus Christ, Christians must learn to listen to our context, be ready to be transformed, and be present in order to respond faithfully to the needs of those in our communities.

The Theology of Putting Down Roots

When Jesus talked about the parable of the vine and the branches in John 15, he was not simply referring to the close connection between the Lord and the Church. Rather, he employed the analogy of the vine because it was a common fruit-bearing plant in the Galilee area and it also represented Israel (Psalms 80:8; Isaiah 5:1-7). Jesus knew for certain that people in Galilee could easily comprehend the theology of putting down roots if he used the example of the vine and the branches.

Putting down roots for a missional congregation means that the local church not only needs to know the dynamics in the neighborhood, but it should also take part in the community, just as plants draw nutrients from the soil. Sparks explains, “It is coming to know your neighborhood and becoming one of its characters.”⁵⁴ Putting down roots is not merely getting to know the community, but becoming one of them. Whatever happens in our neighborhood is the church’s concern. Likewise St. Christopher’s cannot stand as a silo without caring and participating in events occurring in society. This section examines a deeper meaning of putting down roots from two passages: the parable

⁵³ Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 58.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

of the Good Samaritan and Jesus' teaching on servanthood. These passages give new insights into the attitude of loving our communities.

The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

In the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan, the Church can identify who our neighbor is and what it means to love our neighbors. When a lawyer asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life, Jesus responded that he must “love the Lord with all that you have and love your neighbor as yourself” (10:27). Commentator Leon Morris suggests that Jesus wanted the lawyer to focus on loving God and his neighbors, rather than seeking God by accomplishing certain tasks.⁵⁵ When Christians try to become missional, we often first consider what we should do to reach out to the unchurched. The adaptive challenge we must face is how we can truly love God and love our neighbors before we do anything else.

In the parable, both the priest and the Levite could easily have justified themselves for not helping the wounded man, with reasons such as not wanting to become ceremonially unclean or to avoid being the next victim of robbery. Similarly, Christians can also find many excuses to justify themselves for not caring for their neighbors. It was likely tradition and faith regulations that hindered the two religious men from helping the injured man. Likewise, at St. Christopher's, we could let ourselves be completely overwhelmed and occupied by church worship, fellowship, or other activities, and allow these to prevent us from noticing the needs in our communities. We are often distracted from putting down roots in our environment.

⁵⁵ Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 205.

Notwithstanding, an unexpected and unwelcomed character, a Samaritan, arrived on the scene and helped this Jewish man. When he saw the wounded man, Luke writes that he was “moved with pity” (10:33). A loving heart begins with compassion. Compassion moves us to understand a situation and compels us to act. To take root is also to love our community and to have compassion for those in need. Sparks, Soerens and Friesen write, “Without love there is no motivation to be faithfully present to the other. Without love there is no capacity to be fully available to the Spirit’s revelation. Without love there is no reason to drop your outcomes and enter into relationships with vulnerability. Love enables you to be present to the other.”⁵⁶ The Samaritan man tended to the wounds of the injured man, put him on his animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. He even paid two days’ worth of wages to cover the extended stay of the injured man at the inn (10:34-35). Taking root involves extending care to the needs of others. Taking root also include using local resources to help our neighbours. When a church tries to take root in its community, instead of ordering supplies from overseas, we should first consider building relationships with our local merchants.

This parable demonstrates that godliness can be found in anyone. God’s Kingdom is certainly beyond Israel and it supersedes the ministry of the Church. This realization assures us that God is already at work in our neighborhoods, even through the acts of non-believers, and regardless of a person’s faith, race, or class. As a congregation seeking to be missional, St. Christopher’s should pay attention to these acts of love and grace of God.

⁵⁶ Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 69.

Finally, the Samaritan did not expect the injured man to pay him back. Instead he told the innkeeper, “I will repay you whatever more you spend” (10:35). To love our neighbors implies that there are no strings attached. When Christians build relationships with locals, it is often with the hope that they will one day become Christians through our actions, or in return do something good for the church, such as supporting our fundraising or rummage sale. This parable demands us to expect nothing from them. After helping and building relationships with our neighbors, if they decide not to become Christians or join our church, we are still be their neighbors.⁵⁷ We are to love them genuinely, simply because Jesus first loved us. After all, being missional is discovering the work of God in our communities, whether or not that involves conversion of non-believers in the way we imagine it.

The parable of the Good Samaritan provides a perfect example of being missional. Taking root in the community obliges Christians to lay down that which is preoccupying us, pay attention to what is happening in our surroundings, have compassion for the needy, notice acts of God even if they come from unexpected people, and love our neighbors without any hidden agenda. Doing so puts us on the right road toward becoming a missional church.

Being Church: To Serve Not to be Served (Mark 10:35-45)

As Jesus and his disciples were traveling towards Jerusalem, Jesus told them that he would die and rise again in three days (10:33-34). James and John thought that this would be the advent of the new Israel, and they asked Jesus to reserve the most important

⁵⁷ Ibid., 103.

posts for them so that they could sit on his right and left hands in his glory. But James and John did not understand what the kingdom of God was. They thought that Jesus was about to overthrow the Roman Empire and build a new earthly kingdom. They missed the point of Jesus' intentions.

In the same way, when missional church tries to root itself into the community, the parish needs to be cautious regarding the kind of ambition we may have when reaching out. We ought to examine our motives to determine whether we are seeking to make Christ known or whether we are only interested in extending the church into the neighborhood. In our self-examination, we should also ask ourselves whether we understand the meaning of the kingdom of God in our community.

Jesus asked the two disciples, "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?" (10:38). According to commentator William Barclay, "the cup" in Psalms and in the book of Isaiah represents the life and experience that God has given to us.⁵⁸ Drinking from the cup signifies that we would bear the lives that God has bestowed on us, even though it may include sickness, suffering, betrayal, and persecution. Jesus continued, "Or [are you able to] be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (10:39). In Greek "be baptized" is *bebaptismenos*, which means "submerged."⁵⁹ This term is used when someone is submerged by debt, sorrow, questions, or by water. Jesus was asking the two disciples, "Can you face being submerged in hatred and pain and death, as I have

⁵⁸ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Mark*, Rev. ed. (Burlington, ON: Welch Publishing Company Inc., 1975), 255.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

to be?”⁶⁰ Likewise, when a church prepares to take up the cross and become missional, we must consider whether we are ready to accept the hardship of loving our neighbors and being rejected. We must consider whether our missional congregations can take on more responsibilities in the neighborhood even though we may run into financial deficit. If our parishes are located in unfavourable locations, where the extremely poor, prostitutes, or gangsters are to be found, we must ask ourselves whether we can still root ourselves there. We must ask whether our church can respond as John and James did, “We are able” (10:39).

Jesus warned his disciples not to follow the worldly glory of achieving admirable positions. On the contrary, he required them to be servants to others and to be the slave of all (10:42-44). He adds, “For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (10:45). Jesus demonstrated this servanthood by washing his disciples’ feet during the Last Supper, and ultimately by his death on the cross. This is a reminder to the Church that we as Christians exist to serve others.

By serving, Christians learn to put Christ first—“just as we did to the least, we did it to him” (Matthew 25:40). Serving helps us put aside our own ambitions, and seek the will of God instead. If God’s kingdom is beyond the Church and his work is happening in our community, then serving in our neighborhoods will definitely guide us to discover his footprint. In addition, serving leads us to see our purpose. When the parishioners of St. Christopher’s learn to serve the community, we will discover the purpose and mission of our church. We will also find a great sense of fulfillment as we walk with Jesus.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the practice of incarnational missiology from three perspectives: the Anglican tradition, the *Missio Dei*, and the theology of rooting. In the Anglican tradition, the Holy Spirit moved a number of devoted lay and ordained members to acknowledge their sins and to experience the salvation of Jesus. Their love of studying the Bible compelled them to bring the good news to the poor and needy and to seek justice for the underprivileged. This tradition continues into the twenty-first century. From the *missio Dei* aspect, the three persons of God are involved in mission to reach humanity. The gospel is always proclaimed in context and in local culture. Missional congregations need to read the context, anticipate insights into the gospel, expect reciprocity, and practice faithful presence. Finally, in the theology of rooting, missional congregations ought to root themselves into the local context and be part of the community. Chapters 4 and 5 draw on this theology to present the goals, plans, and implementation of this doctoral project at St. Christopher's.

PART THREE

STRATEGY

CHAPTER 4

GOALS AND PLAN

Chapter 4 provides a summary of missional theology in the local framework and the identification of possible obstacles to developing relationships between church members and our neighbors. The ultimate goal of this project is for parishioners to first build deeper relationships with one another, and then with our neighbors. To achieve this goal, we need to first understand incarnational theology. A series of sermons is planned to raise awareness among the congregation and through church-wide small group campaign, with the anticipated outcome being a change in parishioners' attitude towards each other and our neighbors. This change in attitude is a process of spiritual development for the congregation as they experience the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A "Love Your Neighbors" working group is formed to monitor the progress of this project.

Theological Implications and Ministry Overview of Building Relationships

This section bridges the gap, moving from the theology of the previous chapter to the practice of incarnational missiology. This section also identifies insights achieved in regard to the ministry challenge. The preferred outcome of the ministry initiative to reach out to our local community is also presented.

The Theological Meaning of Loving One's Neighbors

It was the Holy Spirit who first inspired a group of Anglican Evangelicals in the eighteenth century to study the Scriptures seriously and to value the salvation of Jesus Christ. As they immersed themselves in the Scriptures, they were compelled to preach the gospel with passion and to reach out to nonbelievers diligently. While they evangelized the underprivileged, they discovered that many of them were uneducated, in poor health, and suffered in poor working conditions. Like the story of the Good Samaritan, the Anglican Evangelicals had compassion on them and began finding ways to change the living conditions of their communities. By 1990, the Anglican Communion officially launched the five marks of mission in which the first four marks very much parallel the work of the early English Evangelicals, namely evangelism, discipleship, serving the poor, and social justice.¹ The fifth mark responds to the Christian stewardship of God's creation. Therefore the Anglican Evangelical tradition has been missional with respect to listening to the teaching of the Bible, discerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and responding to the needs of the people and the environment.

In the theology of *missio Dei*, God has a mission to reach out to all people, both for the forgiveness of sins and to enable and empower holy living. God is so committed to mission that God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each have a unique role in this mission. Through the birth of Jesus, God's mission became incarnational in that God made himself as one of us and humbly lived among us as a human being. His purpose was to allow humankind to understand who he was and to experience his love. He set a

¹ Anglican Communion, "Marks of Mission," Anglican Communion, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx>.

great example of *missio Dei*; in order to love his people, Christ first became one of them. Jesus spoke the local dialect, grew up in his community, and taught and healed using native materials. Therefore, following Christ's model, missional congregations are to learn to read the signs of the Spirit by using the narrative braid technique of listening to God's story, our own spiritual stories, and the story of our context. Missional congregations are ready to be transformed as we anticipate new insights from the gospel and reciprocity from those who receive the good news. In addition, missional congregations must also possess the characteristic of faithful presence in our communities.

The importance of putting down roots should be emphasized in missional ministry. Missional churches need to root themselves into their respective mission fields. The parable of the Good Samaritan demands that we re-prioritize our lives: by taking into account current events in our neighborhood, showing kindness to the disadvantaged, becoming aware of the work of God which happens outside of the Church, and loving our neighbors without a hidden agenda. Moreover, through Jesus' teaching on serving, missional congregations must learn to accept the context that Christ has given to them and submerge themselves into this context despite hardships they may face. Through service, we discover that by putting others first, our kindness will reflect Christ to them. With this understanding of incarnational missiology, St. Christopher's can take action steps toward becoming a missional church.

The Preferred Future for St. Christopher's

Based on the above theological discussion of incarnational missiology, there are three major propositions to bring about a preferred future at St. Christopher's. These three propositions can be summarized as awaken, know, and love. The first proposition—awaken—is for parishioners to draw upon the tradition of Anglican Evangelical spirituality. It was the Spirit of God who inspired and motivated the early awakeners. These Evangelicals then found salvation in Christ and began to study the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit continued to arouse their passion for the gospel, and they began to preach and respond to the needs of the people. In the same way, as St. Christopher's is preparing to be a missional congregation, parishioners should first be awakened to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in their lives. As they study Scripture and open themselves to the Holy Spirit, they will be made new in Christ. They will acknowledging their sins, experience the salvation of Jesus, and be compelled to evangelize and strive for justice for the underprivileged. Without the foundation of this kind of spirituality, all missional efforts will simply be additional programs. Our efforts to serve the community will be meaningless.

The second proposition—know—is for parishioners to appreciate the incarnational model of Christ. Parishioners must learn to put away their agendas and sincerely build relationships with their neighbors. In their conversations with neighbors, they should seek to discover local common interests and make them their own. They should use community resources to address common issues. They can practice the skill of the narrative braid by listening to the story of God, their own spiritual journeys, and the story of their community.

Half of the members of St. Christopher's live outside of Richmond Hill, and those who live in the community are not necessarily familiar with local events and activities. Knowing our community means not only that parishioners know about events going on in the neighborhood, but that we care about them. This goal demands us to be attentive to the affairs in our local neighborhood. This also requires a change in attitude, which will lead to a new relationship with the land and the people who live in the neighbourhood. Knowing our community is the first move to building connections with this place.

The third proposition—love—is for parishioners at St. Christopher's to understand the concept of putting down roots. Taking root is much more than just knowing the community. It means that the members of the congregation engage themselves in the place in which they are located. It is more than merely observing current events or collecting data. It translates to immersing themselves in their neighborhoods and learning to love the people in the community. As Jesus loves all of us, Christians should also love others. Without love, Christians cannot have compassion, kindness, and service. By putting down roots, community concerns will eventually become Christians' concerns. RHC, NYC, and RHE can no longer stand on their properties and be indifferent. They will ultimately be transformed to become part of the community.

By relocating to Richmond Hill in 2008, St. Christopher's embraced the fact that this town would be their mission field. Once the parishioners get to know this place, they will learn to love the people, the environment, and even the culture of this area. To love is to act, and action requires parishioners to behave differently towards this place. To love this mission field indicates that the church cares for the people here and will respond

as necessary. It compels the congregation to meet new people, and it requires the acquisition of new skills in building friendship with the neighbors.

Hence, the preferred future of this doctoral project is for the parishioners of St. Christopher's to take these steps sequentially: first, to grow spiritually; then, to understand the humility of the incarnational model; and finally to engage the community by putting down roots. From the perspective of the leadership, this is accomplished by systematically leading the congregation into these transformative practices. The first step is to re-introduce Anglican Evangelical spirituality to St. Christopher's. Parishioners need to appreciate the love of God again. The second step is to encourage parishioners to follow Christ's incarnational model, and to immerse themselves in the local Richmond Hill community. By getting to know the locals, the third step follows naturally, which is practicing the theology of putting down roots. These are sequential steps to guide the congregation towards becoming missional. Many churches try short-cuts and attempt to put down roots before demonstrating faithful presence, but their efforts are in vain.

In order to prepare the members of St. Christopher's to get to know their neighbors and to learn to love them, the ministry initiative will be placed under the banner of the "Love Your Neighbors" campaign. This title re-affirms Jesus' teaching of the greatest commandment, to love the Lord with all that we have and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27). To love God is also to love our neighbors. Christians cannot say they love God without showing love to their neighbors.

The Content of the Strategy

As there are three propositions for a preferred future in this ministry initiative, the next step is to determine how to achieve these goals. This section documents and analyses the specific components of the “Love Your Neighbors” campaign. The campaign has three parts, which are tied to the propositions for the preferred future—awaken, know, and love. In order to awaken the congregation to the work of the Holy Spirit, a Lenten small group series focuses the congregation on what God is doing among and around us (February-April 2015). In order to help the congregation know their neighbors, congregants are challenged to pray for and meet at least eight neighbors (May-July 2015). Finally, in order to help the congregation act in love, activities at St. Christopher’s are scheduled as opportunities to welcome our neighbors to church (August-December 2015).

Pre-Launch Activities (Fall 2014-February 2015)

The “Love Your Neighbors” working group was formed under the umbrella of the Nurturing (Christian Education) Department at St. Christopher’s in the fall of 2014. Its purpose was to design a missional transformation initiative for 2015. In the discussion, parish leaders discovered that many of the parishioners do not even know each other within the church. Some of them may have attended the same Bible study group for over ten years, but they do not know much about each other. Many group members only focus on studying the Bible, but pay little attention to other people’s lives. They seem to know how to love God and yet do not know how to care for others. It is also a cultural behaviour as Chinese are taught to mind their own business but not that of others.

Another possible reason that members are cautious about caring for and being vulnerable among others is the fear of rumors being spread, which results in broken church fellowship and disunity. Consequently, loving one another is a challenge at St. Christopher's. Hence, in this ministry initiative, addressing Jesus' teaching of loving one another is imperative, and must precede any discussion of loving those outside of the church. This first stage comprises Part I of the "Love Your Neighbors" campaign.

Part I: Awaken—Preparation (February-April 2015)

Part I of the initiative involves a Lenten Bible study series. The material of the Lenten Bible study series is based on two books: *The New Parish* by Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, and *The Art of Neighboring* by Pathak and Runyon. In early January 2015, all group leaders and any interested individuals were encouraged to read these two books as references. The primary thrust of Part I takes place within the small groups already in place at St. Christopher's, and the material for the series is designed for use in those groups. As a secondary element, the sermon series during the Lenten season also matches the content of the small group material.

There are five sessions in this study series (see Appendix D for outline). Each small group session has the same structure. It begins with "Praise/Ice Breaker," which is the time for group leaders to set the tone for the gathering and for group members to get to know each other. Two hymns related to the theme are recommended. They are *A New Commandment*, based on John 13:34, and a Chinese hymn, 主的愛 ("Love of the Lord"). In the beginning of each session's material, there is a suggested ice-breaking question to prepare group members for the topic of discussion. The next part is

Scripture reflection and discussion. This is the main content of the session, whereby group members share and discuss selected quotations from the two reference books and passages. After the discussion, it is important to have time to discuss application. Group members discuss how they can apply what they have just learned and discuss how to implement it in their daily lives. The last part is memorization: all members are encouraged to learn by heart the key Bible verse of the lesson so that the Word of God can be imprinted in our lives and minds.

Lesson 1, “Faithful Presence,” is based on Chapter 3 of *The New Parish*.² The purpose of this lesson is to address the first goal of theological awakening, in order to build a stronger spiritual relationship with God. The key points here are knowing that there is reason for us to be where we live. Faithful presence is about our presence and God’s presence at work and at our neighborhoods.

Lesson 2, “Building Loving Relationship,” is about loving one another in the body of Christ. As Jesus was able to start and continue a conversation with the Samaritan woman, participants practice simple steps of starting a conversation, finding common interest, and caring for the needs of others. These first two lessons focus on the first campaign goal of awakening parishioners to the Holy Spirit among us.

This leads to Lesson 3, “The Call of Neighboring.” This session is derived from Chapters 1 and 2 of *The Art of Neighboring*, entitled “Who Is My Neighbor?” and “Take the Great Commandment Seriously” respectively.³ The purpose is to bring awareness of Jesus’ calling of loving our neighbors and to take action with respect to the second

² Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*, 52; for sample of the booklet layout of Lesson One, see Appendix E.

³ Pathak and Runyon, *The Art of Neighboring*, 15ff.

campaign goal of knowing our community. This involves being aware of what is happening in the local community and reflecting upon how we as Christians can demonstrate that we care. This lesson also addresses reasons why people often choose indifference over engagement.

Lesson 4 is “Listening to the Voices—Overcoming Our Barriers,” which is based upon Chapter 6 of *The New Parish*, “Presencing—Adapting to the Spirit’s Movement.” This lesson engages the congregation in the third campaign goal: to love the mission field. It encourages participants to focus on their listening skills, particularly listening to others, but also listening to themselves and to the Holy Spirit. In a conversation between two people, good listeners show love and care in sharing their stories. Using the narrative braid exercise, group members should attempt to listen to God’s story, the neighbor’s personal spiritual journey, and the story of the community. This reinforces members to practice faithful presence as mentioned in Lesson 1. This session also includes a listening self-evaluation exercise, in which participants rate their listening skills (see Appendix F).

The final lesson is Lesson 5, “Rooting—Showing Them We Care.” This focuses on the theology of putting down roots, which also addresses the third campaign goal: to love the mission field. This lesson is adapted from *The New Parish*, Chapter 7, “Rooting—Growing Stability within Your Place,” and *The Art of Neighboring*, Chapter 9, “The Art of Setting Boundaries.” This is a call to love one’s neighbours and to care for the community. Using the parable of the Good Samaritan, parishioners are exhorted to love their neighbors as the Samaritan man loved his neighbor. Boundary-setting is

discussed in this lesson as well, particularly the difference between being responsible to someone in need versus being responsible for someone in need.

Part II: Know—Meeting Our Neighbors (May-July 2015)

After engaging in the Lenten Bible study series, parishioners are called to begin Part II—meeting their neighbors. All parishioners are encouraged to pray and to meet eight of their neighbors, including neighbors in the North York area as well as the Richmond Hill area. They should share their names, mention their church, and express their willingness to be good neighbors.

It is hoped that many of the lessons learned in the Lenten Bible study series come into play as parishioners get to know their neighbors. Beyond meeting neighbors, parishioners are encouraged to become aware of what is happening in the local community and consider how they as Christians can demonstrate that they care. They are encouraged to choose engagement over indifference.

Part III: Love—Welcoming Our Neighbors (August-December 2015)

After meeting their neighbors, the next step is Part III: loving our neighbors. From August till December, the church offers several opportunities to welcome these neighbors to church events. The first is called “Get to Know Your Neighbors” on July 11. Other events include the Community Fun Day on July 25, which raises funds for a local food bank and helps youth living on the margins of society; a church picnic at Toronto Centre Island on August 8, St. Christopher’s anniversary celebration on September 20, and the Cantonese evangelistic meeting on September 26 and Christmas celebrations.

Once again, it is hoped that the lessons studied in the Lenten Bible study series are incorporated into this part of the campaign. Parishioners should recall the teaching on being good listeners and the narrative braid as they seek to love their neighbors. They should also remember the example of the Good Samaritan, who loved cross-culturally and generously, as well as the lessons on boundary-setting. The timeline for the “Love Your Neighbors” campaign is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Timeline for the “Love Your Neighbors” Campaign

Date	Events
October 8, 2014	Formation of “Love Your Neighbors” working group under the Mission Department
October 26	Advisory Board approval of the whole year plan for 2015
January 10, 2015	Small group leaders orientation
January 24	Worship committee agreed on and designed special elements for worship
January 25	Promotion of “Love Your Neighbors” Lenten Series - Inviting people to join small groups - Encouraging people to order the two reference books
February 1	Distributing small group discussion material
February 22	Launch “Love Your Neighbors” Campaign Part I - Preparation Week 1 “Faithful Presence”
March 1	Week 2 “Building Loving Relationship”
March 8	Week 3 “The Call of Neighboring”
March 15	Week 4 “Listening to the Voices – Overcoming our barriers”
March 22	Week 5 “Rooting – Showing Them We Care”
May	Launch “Love Your Neighbors” Campaign Part II – Get to Know Your Neighbors Handout Guidelines for “Meet Our Neighbors” activities
June 7	Program review by small group leaders
June 27	Summer Retreat – “Go Beyond the Fence: Finding God in Our Neighborhood”
July 11	“Get to Know Your Neighbors” event
July 25	Community Fun Day
August 8	Launch “Love Your Neighbors” Campaign Part III – Welcoming Our Neighbors Centre Island Picnic
September 20	Church 24 th Anniversary Celebration
September 25 & 26	Evangelistic Meetings

As a church-wide campaign, the target population includes all parishioners of St. Christopher's, including those who are part of RHC, RHE, and NYC. The Lenten Bible study series occurs primarily in the existing small groups of St. Christopher's, and secondarily in the sermons preached during Lent. Most church members attend Sunday worship services, and nearly all of them attend a small group as well, so Part I, "Awaken," is designed to reach nearly 100 percent of parishioners.

Conclusion

This chapter draws on the essence of the theological implications from Chapter 3, which created the three objectives for the "Love Your Neighbors" campaign: awaken, know, and love. Through various discussions and preparation of the working group, material was drafted for a five-session Lenten Bible study series. Within this series, small group discussions focus on the meaning of being faithful and missional within and outside of the church. The sermon series during Lent also corresponds to the same material. After the Lenten Bible study, participants are exhorted to meet their neighbors as well as those who live near the church, and to demonstrate love to their neighbors following the example of the Good Samaritan. The final chapter describes the implementation process and the challenges faced.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

This chapter presents the implementation strategies of the “Love Your Neighbors” campaign, which targets accomplishing the following three goals: first, to awaken St. Christopher’s parishioners theologically; second, to know our community which includes building relationships among our members and with our neighbors; and finally, to love our mission field. A summary and evaluation of the campaign is described in this chapter, which outlines the chronology of this project from fall 2014 to fall 2015. Small group leaders training and follow-up events are presented. The whole process and procedures are evaluated and survey results are analyzed.

Pilot Project Summary

The “Love Your Neighbors” working group was formed under the umbrella of the Nurturing Department on October 8, 2014. As pastor of RHC, I presented the preliminary plan of this new missional initiative with the launch of the Lenten Bible study series in 2015. The Sunday preaching series during Lent would coincide with the theme of each week during Lent. The working group also collaborated with the worship committee to provide special elements to reinforce the message during those five Sunday

services. It was the working group which identified challenges facing the congregation, such as the lack of bonding within the congregation and knowledge deficit regarding being missional. In the absence of fellowship cohesiveness, spiritual enlightenment, and missional theology, St. Christopher's would not be transformed.

This year-long "Love Your Neighbor" plan, as stated in Chapter 4, was presented at and accepted by the Advisory Board on October 26, 2014. In this written research project, Part I of the "Love Your Neighbor" campaign, which occurred during Lent 2015, is described and discussed in full. Parts II and III are only briefly reported on here, as St. Christopher's has only thus far completed the evaluation of Part I.

Leadership and Training

On January 10, 2015, fifteen leaders representing eleven small groups gathered at a meeting room at RHC to receive training and orientation for the "Love Your Neighbors" Lenten Bible study series. Together with the working group, I introduced the leaders to the year-long plan as our missional transformation effort to love our neighbors. The need to manifest faithful presence, to first love each other in Christ before we can meet strangers, was conveyed and reinforced. Group leaders were asked to encourage their members to spend time getting to know each other, starting by making small talk with each other. Together group members learned about the call of neighboring, listening skills for hearing the voice of God, how to present their own stories, and how to listen to the voice of the local community.

In the last part of the training, the importance of putting down roots was emphasized, which drew attention to people living in the neighbourhood. I led the

leaders through Lesson 1 in order to demonstrate how the lesson could be conducted. Afterwards, group leaders provided their feedback and suggestions, which resulted in some minor alterations of the material.

At the same time, the Caring Department also came up with a list of people who had not participated in a small group. Small group leaders then invited these potential members according to their ages, geographical areas, and interests to their groups. An announcement was also placed in the church weekly bulletin for over a month to promote participation in a small group during Lent.

Part I: Awaken—Preparation: The Lenten Bible Study Series

Of the fifteen small groups in St. Christopher's, eleven of them participated in this campaign during Lent. One group decided to start in the fall instead. Some of them met weekly, while others met bi-weekly. The Richmond Hill Choir combined all five lessons into two sessions, while the North York Choir spent half an hour each time during their choir practice to go through the material. The Scarborough group did not participate as most of their members were already attending the Wednesday Bible Study group. The men's group and the youth group did not participate as they had other ongoing programs during Lent. Due to the fact that parishioners at St. Christopher's are generally busy and have multiple commitments in their lives, participation in the group discussion was greatly appreciated, even if the format of the campaign was changed slightly to meet their schedules. By October 2015, a total of 126 people had taken part in this small group series. This number is equivalent to 84 percent of the church's average Sunday attendance.

The sermon topics for the five weeks followed the five lessons of the small group series. Preachers introduced the topic of the week, and then small groups met during the week to discuss the sermon and lesson content. On January 24, the Worship Committee had met to discuss the special elements that would take place during the five Sunday services in Lent, and these special elements added a great deal to the entire campaign (see Table 2 for overview).

Table 2. “Love Your Neighbors” Campaign Worship: Special Elements

Date	Lesson Topic	Worship Theme Special Element
Feb 22	1. Faithful Presence	Introduction to the whole series
Mar 1	2. Building Loving Relationships	Testimonies by parishioners
Mar 8	3. The Call of Neighboring	Homemade video on building relationships in a condominium
Mar 15	4. Listening to the Voices	Making narrative braid bookmark
Mar 22	5. Rooting—Showing Them We Care	Inviting Sunday school to plant seeds in plastic cups to illustrate rooting as the plant germinates

On the first Sunday, the preachers in the three congregations presented an overview of the five-week campaign. Then the sermon began with Lesson 1 on “Faithful Presence,” based on the Bible passage assigned for this lesson from John 15:1-17. The booklet used in the small group setting was introduced during the sermon as well.

On the second Sunday, two parishioners gave five-minute testimonies in each worship service, sharing about how they expressed their faithful presence in their communities. One teacher shared at the NYC service how she went the extra mile to help

a poor student to succeed, and the student later became a Christian. Another parishioner at the RHC service testified how she learned from her late mother to care for shut-ins and the elderly. Their life stories touched many people and demonstrated ways of witnessing for the Lord in our daily lives.

On the third Sunday, the theme was “The Call of Neighboring.” The special element in this service was a pre-recorded home video of Edmund and Margaret Der sharing their testimony. Edmund and Margaret had lived in a condominium for over thirteen years. Upon moving into this high-rise building, they had started a fellowship group to gather the elderly and housewives living in their complex once every two weeks. They shared their stories and dined together. When someone was sick, they took turns cooking meals or brought groceries for them. They became like a family within this community.

On the fourth Sunday, the theme was “Listening to the Voices.” The special element involved the distribution of over 160 pre-made bookmarks. During the sermon, when the preacher introduced the narrative braid, parishioners were asked to braid the bookmark in their hands (see Appendix G). While they braided, the preacher invited them to meditate on the meaning of God’s story, their personal spiritual stories, and the story of their community. The house on the bookmark represents where participants live, and the red and white checkered cloth behind the house symbolizes the fabric of our neighborhood. As a missional congregation, we theologize within our context and bring forth God’s presence and our presence to our community.

The final Sunday’s theme was “Rooting—Showing Them We Care.” The Sunday school students had been invited to plant seeds in plastic cups so that they might observe

the important role of the rooting system of plants. This visual aid helps us to comprehend the incarnational theology of rooting. God puts us in the places we live and work for a reason. Christians should be like plants, rooting ourselves into the community. This includes eating with our neighbors, playing with neighbors' children, and shopping in nearby stores. Unfortunately, due to the cold weather in Canada during Lent and some logistical difficulties, these seeds failed to germinate and we were unable to use them as a visual aid to support the preaching for Lesson 5. Instead, a picture slide of a tree root illustrated the meaning of rooting.

Part II: Know—Meeting Our Neighbors

Part II of the “Love Your Neighbors” campaign was designed to encourage parishioners to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the longer spring days to go out and meet their neighbors. Starting in May, many neighbours come out to work in their gardens, walk, or exercise before or after dinner because of the warm weather. A guideline was handed out in early May to encourage parishioners to meet their neighbors (see Appendix H). The material provided suggestions for conversational topics, such as introducing themselves, finding common ground, listening to concerns in the community, and asking how the church could assist. Through this exercise, parishioners could practice the narrative braid listening technique and faithful presence. In addition, church leaders encouraged small group members to organize outings or vacations together. These casual activities are ideal for building loving relationships within the group and inviting new neighbors to join.

To further encourage parishioners to meet their neighbors, on June 27, St. Christopher's organized a church summer retreat attended by over one hundred parishioners. The theme was "Go Beyond the Fence: Finding God in Our Neighborhood." Guest speakers, both English-speaking and Chinese-speaking, inspired the participants to overcome their hurdles to meet their neighbors. During the retreat, there was a workshop for parishioners to practice making small talk with church members with whom they did not know well (see Appendix I). This workshop was especially designed to prepare parishioners to meet neighbors in Richmond Hill in July.

Two activities in July gave parishioners opportunities to meet the church's neighbours. The first was our "Get to Know Your Neighbors" event on July 11. Parishioners handed out two hundred flyers to the neighbours around the church, inviting them to come out with drinks and snacks in their front yards. Twenty-four parishioners helped out in the events, walking around the neighbourhood and speaking to the neighbors. Unfortunately, only about twelve neighbors came out to talk to us.

The second event related to getting to know the church's neighbors took place on July 25. This annual Community Fun Day took over six months of preparation and involved over fifty of our parishioners plus twenty-eight local high school student volunteers. The event is designed to raise funds for a local food bank and for 360 Kids, an organization that helps local, at-risk youth. The event drew over 150 neighbors to our church for the food fair, rummage sale, game booths, and church information booth. The event also raised over \$2800 for the two local charities.

Part III: Love—Welcoming Our Neighbors

Part III of the “Love Your Neighbors” campaign is “Welcoming Our Neighbors.”

After meeting Richmond Hill neighbors, they were invited to come to the church activities. The parishioners of St. Christopher’s were reminded that even if neighbors refused to come, they would still be the church’s neighbors. Later a church-wide picnic was organized at Toronto's Centre Island on August 8. Seventy-two people participated and twenty of them were new members. Then on September 25 and 26, St. Christopher’s co-hosted with China Christian Mission (CCM) two evangelistic meetings for parishioners to invite their families and friends to hear the gospel. On the second night at St. Christopher’s, approximately one third of those in attendance (about forty people) were non-Christians, which was the target for this event. Five people accepted Christ and another five expressed interest in following follow Jesus.

All of these events were opportunities for parishioners to practice faithful presence, get to know their neighbors, and put down roots in the local community. The church also decided to purchase gospel tracts from local Christian bookstores, rather than ordering them from Hong Kong at a cheaper price. Supporting local bookstores is also part of the rooting theology praxis.

Assessment of the Ministry Initiative

At the time of this writing, only Part I of this project has undergone a full evaluation exercise at St. Christopher’s. In order to evaluate the Lenten Bible study series, all eleven of the participating small group leaders met together to discuss their experiences and determine results. This meeting took place on June 7.

The small group leaders identified six positive experiences. The first was the teaching on the spirituality of faithful presence. Leaders generally agreed that Lesson 1 widened the understanding of faithful presence among parishioners, and that this spirituality laid the foundation of God's presence, holiness, and grace being manifested wherever Christians.

Second, through sharing life stories and testimonies during the small group gatherings, leaders reported that relationships among small group members deepened. Group members got to each other better as they shared about their spiritual journeys with God. Some of the stories had never been told before, even though group members had been in the same group for many years. Many communicated a sense that their friendships were stronger.

Third, leaders expressed that the listening self-evaluation, given in the small groups prior to the teaching on good listening, helped members realize how little they knew about active listening and that they needed to grow in this area. Most people did not realize that they had a listening deficiency in conversations. In fact, this exercise helped many parishioners to acknowledge that they should work on their active listening skills prior to taking any other steps.

Fourth, leaders reported that the lesson on compassion was a highlight of the series. Through the Good Samaritan parable, group members learned to be compassionate towards the needy regardless of their skin color, class, or economic status. Parishioners grew in their understanding that Christians ought to love others by expressing compassion. This lesson widened the horizon for many parishioners that the

church should not only care for those who may join the church. Some small group participants even discussed finding ways to care for non-Chinese neighbors.

Fifth, leaders stated that Lesson 5 on putting down roots helped members to comprehend the theology of rooting ourselves into the community and learning to be part of the neighborhood. As most immigrants are in the habit of keeping to themselves, this lesson drew participants' attention toward being aware of what is happening in the community. Participants began to see the importance of participating in more events in the neighborhood.

Finally, the leaders noted that there were helpful illustrations to help parishioners understand the material. They noted particularly the illustration of lobster molting from *The New Parish*, in which a church seeking to grow and change is like a lobster shedding its exoskeleton. Like a lobster, St. Christopher's needs to let go of the old methodology of doing ministry and reconnect with the local community.

During this evaluation meeting, leaders also discussed aspects of the campaign that needed improvement. Some group leaders expressed that it would have been helpful if they had been introduced to the two reference books earlier. In that case they could have begun to read them earlier and spent more time in studying the material. Those leaders who did not get the chance to read the two reference books had more difficulty in grasping the theological concepts of each theme. Given the busy schedule of our leaders, reading any book is challenging for many of them. Hence, they were not expected to make time to read the reference books. Notwithstanding, these reference books were introduced to them a month prior to Lent. In fact, only six leaders actually read the books either by ordering both books for themselves or borrowing them from the church library.

Some leaders also indicated that a leaders' manual would have been a helpful tool. The workbook given to all participating small group members was initially designed to be self-sufficient. Nevertheless, it was inadequate for some leaders to fully understand the material. Another resource given to the small group leaders was the sermon script for each sermon, which I emailed to the leaders prior to the Sunday service each week. In the future, some of this material could be re-worked as a leaders' training manual. Those who read the books found these resources to be very beneficial.

For Part II, the focus was to know the community by meeting neighbors. The working group did not conduct a comprehensive survey to find out the number of neighbors parishioners met. However from a number of small group discussions, many shared that they began to be aware of things happening in their community and to pay attention to matters related to their neighbors. Over this three months period, I personally met over twenty-five neighbors on my street. I wrote down their names on the guideline the church provided and prayed for them every day. I noticed that a number of them began to share their challenges with me. I took these opportunities to practice the meaning of faithful presence. One neighbor even shared with me about his gambling addiction. After praying with him, he told me a few weeks later that he now cut down going to casino from three times a week to once a week. These experiences were shared in my Sunday sermons to encourage others to get to know their neighbors.

The key word for Part III was love. We show our love by welcoming them to St. Christopher's. There were a number events to encourage parishioners to bring their friends and neighbors to get to know our church and to know Jesus. It is natural to think that to love our neighbors, Christians ought to welcome them warmly to church.

Parishioners worked hard to invite newcomers to come. Our hospitality team greeted them from parking lot to front door and welcomed them from the stage to tea reception. We were excited to reach our goal of one-third non-Christians in the congregation to hear the good news of Jesus.

Overall, this ministry initiative was successful in awakening the church theologically. The fact that nearly 84 percent of the congregation participated in the small group Bible study is a strong showing. The positive report from the small group leaders was encouraging in that parishioners seemed to grasp and engage with the material.

Conclusion

Becoming a missional congregation takes time; however, it is achievable. Ultimately, the hope was to achieve the three purposes of being awakened theologically, getting to know our community, and loving our mission field. An indicator of success at St. Christopher's is such that when more than 10 percent of the parishioners are able to grasp the three goals of this movement within the first year, the parish was deemed ready to begin to move towards becoming a missional congregation. If half of the parishioners are showing signs of caring for the community in two years, St. Christopher's would be on the path of missional transformation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This doctoral project explores ways to equip St. Christopher's to become a missional congregation. The purpose of this project is to mobilize the congregation to understand, reflect upon, and engage the local Richmond Hill community. Over the course of the project, three sequential steps have been determined for a missional transformation process to take place at St. Christopher's: to be awakened theologically, to know the local community, and to love the mission field.

Outcomes and Insights Gained

After this 2015 ministry initiative, there are many positive outcomes and insights gained at St. Christopher's that are worth identifying. First, this ministry project emphasized numerous times that parishioners at St. Christopher's need to first learn to love one another before loving their neighbours. Based on the findings of this project, the complicated relationships among the three congregations inform the parish leaders that unity at St. Christopher's is not uniformity under the same roof. Instead, it is knowing that in the midst of the dynamics of interdependent, dependent, and independent relationships among the three congregations, the parish can still become a loving community. The church may not be as united as some leaders hope to see, but building up a loving body of Christ is the ultimate goal.

The positive outcome of being a more unified body has been demonstrated recently in a number of ways. At a few recent funerals held for family members of parishioners, a significant number of parishioners from St. Christopher's were in attendance to support their grieving friends. In addition, at the recent Chinese New Year

celebration on February 7, 2016, it was rare to see many parishioners from RHE who stayed for the tea reception after worship. They not only attended the reception, but members of both RHC and RHE mingled in the church hall for over an hour. This is a very positive indicator which has not been seen for many years at St. Christopher's. Two parishioners even commented to me, "This harmonious and joyful atmosphere has not happened for a long time."

A second positive outcome worth noticing is the practice of faithful presence. Hunter presents three traditional Christian approaches to the world that many still practice; he names these the "defensive against," "relevant to," and "purity from" paradigms of cultural engagement.¹ Explaining why each of these is not a good approach, Hunter introduces a new concept of incarnational theology which he calls "faithful presence," to witness the Lord in our context. The God of Israel and the person of Jesus demonstrated faithful presence, and we, as followers of Christ, should also do the same to commit ourselves to the local community.

The idea of faithful presence has inspired many St. Christopher's parishioners. Although it is hard to measure how much parishioners are practicing being faithfully present, it seems clear that parishioners are spending more time with their neighbors. One example is in the story of a stranger who called to the church office one afternoon seeking a prayer from the pastor. I prayed for her over the phone, and she called over five times during the next three days asking for more prayer support. Each time I prayed for her. She said that she called many churches, and St. Christopher's was the only church that responded to her request. I requested the help of the Caring Department of

¹ Hunter, *To Change the World*, 213-219.

the church to support this desperate woman. Our Caring Department chairperson not only prayed for her every evening, but she even took her to medical appointments and brought groceries to her once a week, despite the fact that she drove an hour round-trip to do so. The church is blessed to have such a loving parishioner at St. Christopher's.

Just before the Chinese New Year, this woman called me again with our Caring Department chairperson next to her, wishing me a happy Chinese New Year. The chairperson told me that the woman finally smiled. Over the phone, her joyful voice demonstrated that she was happier than before, all because she was loved and cared for. This was a true indicator of the praxis of faithful presence after the ministry initiative. It was like God was sending a test to the parish to see whether we could love our neighbours and put faithful presence into action. Currently, more members of the Caring Department have been recruited to support this needy woman.

The third positive outcome has been overcoming the fear of inviting friends to church activities. In this missional initiative, church members were exhorted to get to know their neighbors and to care for them. After getting to know their neighbors, they were encouraged to invite relatives or friends to come to church activities during Part III, "Welcoming Our Neighbors" from August to December 2015. It was encouraging to see twenty newcomers at the church picnic in August. In September, the evangelistic meeting had forty people in the audience who were non-Christians, invited by church members. By the end of 2015, the church gained eighteen active new members compared to twelve in the previous year. This is a 50 percent increase from 2014 to 2015. Moreover, among the eighteen, sixteen of them were invited by St. Christopher's parishioners. This is another positive sign of missional transformation after the campaign.

The fourth positive outcome relates to the goal of loving our mission field. Although St. Christopher's moved to Richmond Hill in 2008 with the hope of reaching the Chinese residents in the neighbourhood, when the core members do not live in the community, it is difficult to truly put down roots in the area. There are many ways in which the parish can continue to try. However these attempts will only be event based, rather than submerging into the community as the theology of rooting teaches.

At the time of this writing, I live in the Richmond Hill neighbourhood, and the church relies on me to inform them regarding ways the parish can connect. The concept of a mission field should not be limited to where the church is currently located, even though it is the purpose of moving into Richmond Hill. The mission field should be expanded to where the parishioners are—where they work and where they reside. The mission field of St. Christopher's should include both the Richmond Hill neighborhood as well as where parishioners live and work. This is a change of strategy in that the parish should provide resources or activities both within the neighborhood surrounding the church as well as where the parishioners' homes and small groups are.

Next Steps for Missional Transformation at St. Christopher's

To reinforce what the church has learnt in the past year, the next step is to help the congregation to know the community and to love the mission field. These two steps must necessarily be sustained by the kind of spirituality that is rooted in Christ and led by the Holy Spirit. Therefore the church decided to set the theme for 2016 as "Enriching Our Souls, Caring for Our Neighbors." We understand that the 2015 initiative was only the beginning. In order to practice the theology of faithful presence and rooting, there will be

a one-day, quiet retreat on March 5, 2016 for the whole church. Without a clear understanding and the praxis of faithful presence, our outreach ministry will simply be doing programs, rather than manifesting the holiness of God's presence.

Then in April during Eastertide, the church will launch a small group campaign using Rick Warren's devotional and small group discussion book, *Better Together*.² For forty days, the parish will focus on loving God's family, reaching out together, enjoying fellowship together, growing together, serving together, and worshipping together. Also, in terms of leadership training, there are four leadership sessions to go through every chapter of the small group discussion. This is much more extensive than the single training session held prior to the 2015 campaign, and it is hoped that this time the group leaders will be better equipped. Moreover, the English and Chinese resource books are being made available to the small group leaders three months before the launch date. At the end of the small group campaign using *Better Together*, it will be the Day of Pentecost, which the church will celebrate, as a sent community, by commissioning parishioners to serve the local community. As the parish will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2016, all parishioners are encouraged to serve with their small groups for twenty-five hours of community service. Together, the parish will engage the community, which is part of the effort to get to know our community and to love our mission field.

Each community service project should not simply be getting a job done, such as sorting food in a food bank or raking neighbor's leaves. Each is an opportunity to listen to the community, talking to the locals, or having a neighborhood walk. In order to learn

² Rick Warren, *Better Together: What on Earth Are We Here For?* 3rd ed. (Lake Forest, CA: Saddleback Church, 2008.)

to love the mission field, the members of St. Christopher's ought to pray in the place where we serve and adopt the place to which Christ has sent us. This will be a practice of faithful presence when we are sent to the field. Parishioners will be asked to notice the work of God in the local community. Other initiatives can be tree planting in May; hosting a booth in the local Ward 3 annual barbeque in July, where over 3,000 residents are expected to participate in a fun fair; joining the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast in May; or participating in the local hospital fundraising run. By taking part in the community, the church not only makes ourselves known, but we begin to root into our neighborhood.

As the small group campaign and community projects are planned for 2016 to follow-up on the missional process undertaken in the previous year, there are a number of issues that the leaders of St. Christopher's should watch for. The first is the change from being doers to being listeners. Many Chinese from Hong Kong love to get things done. Getting things done is considered productive, while doing "nothing," like listening, is treated as a waste of time. If the congregation wants to become a missional church, the leaders need to understand that it is acceptable, and even preferred, to not get a lot done during the community project phase. In fact, serving the community is only a tool for St. Christopher's to listen to the voices of the neighbors. Parishioners ought to have skills of listening and asking open questions to show that we care. Without these skills, the parish will rely solely on the pastor to identify the voice of the community.

The second issue that church leaders should pay attention to is the discernment of the Spirit. Once each group gathers issues and concerns that they hear from the community, then church leaders need to decide which ones God wants the parish to respond to. St. Christopher's cannot respond to all of the needs in Richmond Hill. The

leaders need to use discernment to determine which needs are a good fit with the interests and passions of parishioners. The leaders should ask questions such as the following: Is this achievable? Does the church have the human resources and financial resources to do this? Do we have the space to offer this kind of ministry? Who could be in charge of this ministry project? Who could be part of the organizing committee? What kind of resources could we get from outside of the church? Can we invite the community to partner with us? Is this project sustainable? Can we have a pilot project to test drive the ministry? How do we measure success? What kind of indicators do we look for?

Meanwhile, the church also has to quantify whether the request is realistic or whether it is only a dream of certain individuals. Without having affirmation regarding whether the church is called to meet that particular need, it may only be a waste of time and effort. At one time, there was a new parishioner urging the church to start a Mandarin ministry. She said that once the church started a Mandarin worship service, over a hundred Mandarin-speaking Anglicans would come. After a few months of persuading the church leaders, a Mandarin worship on Sunday afternoon was finally launched. However, attendance never reached above twenty. Church leaders were exhausted by ministering at three services every Sunday, and the Mandarin service was cancelled after nine months. The problem with this endeavor was that no one verified the fact that Mandarin-speaking Anglicans would be willing to leave their Evangelical churches to join a new Anglican worship service on Sunday afternoon. If the initiative is truly from the Holy Spirit, there will be many indicators to lead the way to the new ministry.

Implications for the Larger Christian Community

It is exciting to consider how this doctoral project can be beneficial to the larger Christian community. As many churches struggle to find a vision or simply to survive, the “Love Your Neighbors” small group material can be a helpful resource to build small group ministries and to be awakened theologically. The two resources, *The New Parish* and *The Art of Neighboring*, are accompanying references. This initiative is more effective if Sunday sermon messages coincide with the theme of the week. Because learning without practice is futile, the parish using this material should plan a year ahead for the missional initiative. In addition to the small group series, church leaders should also plan ahead to encourage participants to practice what they have learned during the small group series by meeting new neighbors and having meaningful conversations with them. Then the church can discern, with the guidance of the Spirit, what they have heard from their community and how they can respond to the needs around them. Church leaders should expect that it will take at least a year for a congregation to grasp the theological meaning of being missional. Then the following year, the parish should begin to move towards missional transformation.

This research project can also be beneficial to the Canadian Chinese Christian Church. There are many successful Chinese Evangelical churches in Canada. Chinese Alliance, Chinese Baptists, and some non-denomination churches are very passionate in evangelism and in church planting. They not only send missionaries in Canadian small towns to plant churches, but they even sent them to Central America and South America

to start churches and build seminaries. In terms of church growth and passionate spirituality, they are way ahead of the Anglican Church.

However, theologically, they believe that they are the ones who can bring God's salvation to Chinese non-Christians. Their mission is more about church extension than fulfilling the work of God in the community. This is certainly a theological tension between the Chinese Evangelicals and the *missio Dei*. God's work is already taking place in non-believers before Christians evangelize to them. But this concept is foreign to Evangelicals, who may wonder that if this is true, they do not need to spread the gospel. Missional theology points out that God's grace is already upon people; it is the role of Christians to make it known. Instead of using pre-scripted evangelistic tactics, Chinese Evangelicals could gain from this curriculum by learning how to listen to people's stories and identify Christ's footprint in their lives. By showing God's action in their experiences, Christians care about their livelihood and can introduce the salvation of Jesus. This approach is less judgmental and more loving.

The second benefit of this project to Canadian Chinese Christians relates to caring for the community. Most Canadian Chinese are immigrants, and immigrants focus on their own survival and their business. The land in which immigrants live is a foreign soil no matter how many years they have lived here. This is not their homeland; it is someone else's land. Immigrants are happy just to have a place to stay, a school to study in, and work to do. They do not consider community activities and problems to be of their concern. Most simply go home after work and keep their curtains shut all day, which demonstrates that they do not care what is going on in the neighbourhood. This project challenges this kind of behaviour. Using this curriculum Chinese Christians are

encouraged to open their blinds and to be aware of the pulse of the community. As Jeremiah 29:7 states, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” Even though Chinese immigrants are foreigners in the land, Chinese Christians can still seek the welfare of the Land. God’s blessings can prevail through the good work of Canadian Chinese Christians.

The second benefit of this project to Canadian Chinese Christians relates to rethinking the ministry target group. Traditionally, Canadian Chinese churches only serve the Chinese immigrants and their second generations. Chinese churches have become an ethnic hub for immigrants to find emotional support and to preserve Chinese culture. The ministry target group has only been Chinese. Very few Chinese churches would consider spending their time to reach out to the non-Chinese. However, missional theology calls Christians to identify God’s work in our communities and to join in. This may include serving the non-Chinese poor, the indigenous people, or other immigrant groups, such as adopting a refugee family. This cross-cultural ministry will pose a great challenge to many immigrants to step out of their comfort zone. Nevertheless, this is the beginning of putting down roots and encouraging integration.

Conclusion

It is my hope that through this research project of St. Christopher’s, not only this congregation can discover the meaning of being church, but many other churches can also discover the meaning of missional church. To be a missional church is to participate in the great work of God’s Kingdom on earth. For those churches who are lost in

ministry, I hope this project can awaken them theologically, motivate them to get to know their community, and learn to love the mission field to which Jesus has sent them.

APPENDIX A: The Composition of Hong Kong Immigrants at St. Christopher's

Category	Status	Characteristics	Ministry Needs
1. Pioneers	Moved to Canada between 1967-1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Retired or semi-retired professionals – Integrated into Canada – Most are now grandparents – Long absences from Canada due to frequent travelling – Age 60 + 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Like to offer their time for ministry, but annual travelling and grandparenting commitments limit their involvement
2. Canadian Born Chinese	Children of the immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grew up in Canada and familiar with Canadian society and education system – Well educated – Understand some Cantonese – Age 45 and under 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ignorant of the development of English ministry – Need commitment and development of spiritual leaders
3. Sacrificers	Moved to Canada between 1984-1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cannot speak English fluently – Experiencing the most hardship adjusting to the foreign environment and work – Communication & cultural challenge with their children – Age 35-60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Life is frustrating and challenging – May project their anger on church ministry – Need lots of emotional and spiritual support – Once settled after 3 years, they begin to appreciate Canadian living
4. Astronaut Families	Moved to Canada between 1984-1997, but bread winners in the family return to Hong Kong for employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Left family behind in Canada resulting in single parenting – Estranged family relationship or broken marriages – Lack of father figure in children's lives – Age 55-75 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Spouses need lots of emotional support as they have dual roles – After 3 years of adjustment, they adopt the Canadian and single parenting lifestyles
5. Chinese Canadians	Children of the sacrificers and astronaut family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Studied in Canada and are able to secure good employment here – Fluent in English, but prefer Cantonese – Their children are in school and older parents are active seniors – Age 35-55 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This group should be able to take on leadership role in the church – Occasionally they face the threat of job loss
6. Returned-returned Immigrants	Migrated to Canada and moved back to Hong Kong. Now they are back to Canada for retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – They are familiar with Canadian lifestyles as they have lived here before – Decent employment in Canada can still be an issue; may keep their investments or position in Hong Kong to help support their families – Some finished their careers in Hong Kong and retired in Canada to enjoy the health care benefits here – Age 50-65 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Re-adjustment can be a challenge as they still long for lives in their homeland – Most do not plan to find a job in Canada and would be open to volunteer at church
7. Snow Birds	Travelling to Hong Kong at least once a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Retired with family members, children or elderly parents in Hong Kong – This is the most unsettled group as they are constantly preparing to travel again – Unable commit to long-term ministry – Age 58-75 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – They long for their homeland and vice versa. – They can only commit to short-term ministry projects
8. Seniors	Came to Canada for family reunion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Retired; collecting pensions from homeland – Aging and health are their main concerns – Routine medical appointments – Very committed to Sunday worship – Age 75-102 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Like to support the church by attending events and donations – Low participation due to physical and health limitations

APPENDIX B

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S BY THE NUMBERS

Enrolment and Attendance Figures

Service/Ministry	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Members	280	270	280	298	285
Easter Communicants	210	165	175	159	190
Identifiable Regular Givers	195	225	230	237	252
Average Weekly Attendance	160	155	150	148	161
Sunday School Students	12	17	17	23	18
Prayer Groups Members	30	25	25	34	25
Bible Study Group Members	80	105	105	60	104
Baptisms	7	4	3	6	4
Confirmations	0	0	4	0	0
Weddings	1	6	2	3	2
Funerals	3	4	0	6	2

Parish Profile: St. Christopher's Anglican Church, 12.

APPENDIX C

SMALL GROUP MEMBERSHIP AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S

Small Group Membership as of January 2016	
2016 Group	Membership
1. North York Lucy's	9
2. North York Violet's	12
3. Richmond Hill Bible Study Group	13
4. Men's Group	11
5. Scarborough Group	8
6. North York Group	10
7. Thornhill Group	7
8. Light Fellowship	13
9. Wednesday Bible Study Group	16
10. North York Choir	9
11. Richmond Hill Choir	15
12. 416 Group	9
13. Young Couples Group	10
14. Thurs. North York Group	8
15. Youth Group	12
16. St. Christopher's Fellowship	60
17. YEAH Club	26
18. College & Career	8
Total	256
Source: Nurturing Department, St. Christopher's Anglican Church	

APPENDIX D

“Love Your Neighbors” Campaign

Part 1 – The Preparation 2015 Lenten Small Group Series

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Faithful Presence | John 15: 1-17 |
| 2. Building Loving Relationship | John 4: 6-26
Phil 2:1-5 |
| 3. The Call of Neighboring | Luke 10: 25-29
Acts 17: 26-27 |
| 4. Listening to the voices
- Overcoming our barriers | Prov 18: 2-15
Matt 9:16-17 |
| 5. Rooting – Showing them we care | Luke 10: 25-37 |

Reference Books:

Sparks, Paul; Soerens, Tim; Friesen, Dwight J. *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*. InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Pathak, Jay; Runyon, Dave. *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door*. Baker Publishing Group, 2012.

“The gospel becomes so much more tangible and compelling when the local church is actually a part of the community, connected to the struggles of the people and even the land itself.”

Paul Sparks

APPENDIX E

(Sample Small Group Study Guide)
(For complete set, please contact the author)

Lesson 1. Faithful Presence

Ref: The New Parish Ch. 3, p. 52 ff

A. Praise / Ice-breaker

- Praise – A New Commandment / 主的愛
- Ice-breaker – Why do you live where you live?

B. Scripture reflection and discussion

“Faithful presence” ... means that in each situation we are listening for what our relationships require of us and responding according to our capacity. ... We must be present to our situation, listening for what the Spirit is calling us toward.” (Sparks, p. 59)

1. God has placed you where you are for a reason. Do you know what it is?

- Faithful presence is about your presence and God’s presence at work and at your neighborhood.

Read John 15: 1-17

2. What does Jesus expect of us? (vs. 2, 8, 16)
3. In order to bear fruit we need to abide in Jesus (vs. 4). How can we abide in Jesus?
4. What are the challenges I face as I try to abide in Jesus?
5. How can you overcome these challenges?
6. What kind of fruit can Christians produce? (vs. 7, 11-12, 2 Peter 1:5-8)
7. Vs 12, Jesus’ commandment is to “Love one another”. How do you love your brothers and sisters in Christ?

C. Application

8. In the coming weeks, learn to care for and love a church member with whom you don’t normally interact.

Name of the person: _____

How do you show that you care?

His/hers response:

“Without love there is no motivation to be faithfully present to the other. Without love there is no capacity to be fully available to the Spirit’s revelation. Without love there is no reason to drop your outcomes and enter into relationships with vulnerability. Love enables you to be present to the other.” (Sparks, p. 69)

D. Memorize

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

John 15:12

APPENDIX F

Rate Your Listening Skills

How often do you indulge in ten, almost universal, bad listening habits? Check yourself carefully on each one, then tally your score. If you have done this before, do it again and see whether you do better than you did before.

Points	0	3	5	7	10	
Habits	Almost Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost Never	Score
1. Resist ideas that are of no personal interest						
2. Faking attention to the speaker (daydreaming)						
3. Avoiding difficult material (putting off)						
4. Tolerating or creating distractions						
5. Recreating negative past experiences with a person						
6. Returning to "safe" topic when feelings brought out						
7. Getting over-stimulated by some point within the speech						
8. Letting bias or prejudice interfere						
9. Failure to check out or state your feelings						
10. Failure to use non-verbal information						

Your total score: _____

Interpretation of Score:

91 and above: Extraordinarily good listener

81-90: Very good listener

71-80: Good listener

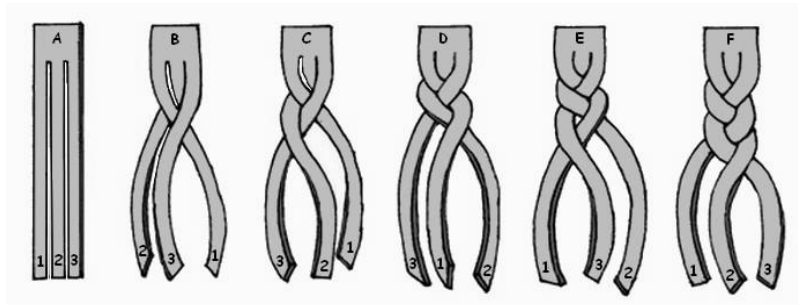
Below 70: You are invited to join a Communication Workshop

Source: Centre for Conflict Resolution Training, *Critical Skills for Communicating in Conflict* (New Westminster, BC: Justice Institute of BC, 1995), 11. Used with permission.

APPENDIX G

Lesson 4. Listening to the Voices Narrative Braid Bookmark

- Meditate while braiding
- Red yarn represents the story of God's salvation
- White yarn represents Jesus cleansing our sins, our spiritual life
- Green yarn represents the environment in which we live
- Life of a Christian, God's salvation and our lives are closely related
- Wherever we go, let us be the faithful presence of Jesus' saving grace
- The house on the bookmark reminds us that our testimony starts from our own home and then moves to our neighbors (the fabric behind the house)



Source: Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J. Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 120 ff.

APPENDIX H

Love Your Neighbors Part II – Meeting Our Neighbors (May-July 2015)

After our Lenten preparation, we now enter Part II from May to July—meeting our neighbors. We encourage everyone to participate, to pray, and to meet eight of your neighbors. We will also engage our neighbors in the area around the Richmond Hill Church, making ourselves known by:

1. Sharing our name
2. Sharing an interesting experience
3. Finding common interests
4. Giving them the opportunity to share any concerns
5. Expressing our willingness as a church to be good neighbors

Meanwhile we will practice “faithful presence” by listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, the voices of our neighbors, and the voice of our own spiritual journey. Then we will ask, “How does Jesus want us to be His witnesses in this neighborhood?” Feel free to share your experiences with your small group. Please remember to pray for this campaign.

Meeting Our Neighbors in Richmond Hill

6/25 (Thurs) 4:30 p.m. – Hand out flyers on Crosby Ave., Becker Rd., and Balkan Rd.

7/11 (Sat) 3 p.m.-5 p.m. – “Get to Know Our Neighbors”: Invite neighbors to share snacks or drinks in their front yard. Parishioners who live in Richmond Hill may walk to meet our neighbors. Others may stay at church to greet the friends in our neighborhood.

7/25 (Sat) 9 a.m. – Community Fun Day

“We don’t love our neighbors to convert them;
we love our neighbors because we are converted.”

Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon

(Back page of the previous page leaflet)

I would like to pray for the following neighbours:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____



May the Lord give me courage to know them, to understand them and to be their neighbours. Amen.

APPENDIX I

Workshop: How to meet our neighbors?

跨越圍欄工作坊

2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

主領：謝子樂牧師

- 目的：
1. 預備 7 月 11 日(六)結識鄰舍
 2. 我們如何與自己的鄰舍建立關係

A. 結識鄰舍

1. 我們去結識鄰舍因為主耶穌要我們「愛鄰舍如同自己」(路 10:27)
2. 「我們不是為了改變鄰舍而去愛他們，我們愛鄰舍是因為我們被改變。」

Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon

B. 結識鄰舍的態度

- 我們說話的語氣代表了我們對對方或對某事情的態度
 - 因此我們首先要有正確的態度去認識我們的鄰舍
 - 與鄰舍交談時，我們要注意：
1. 「上帝愛世人」所以我們也嘗試關心及愛我們的鄰舍
 2. 以愛心及關懷的態度傾談
 3. 我們不是去評論鄰舍的衣著，種族，身材，健康狀況，屋的大小，或擁有什麼形號的車
 4. 留意對方的眼神
 5. 不要有看不起人的態度，反要渴望認識及關心對方
 6. 我們去因為我們想認識他們，從中去為主作見證
 7. 練習「忠信的同行」(Faithful Presence) – 「這是指在每個景況之中，我們聆聽在我們的關係中要求我們作甚麼，而根據自己的能力去作出回應。...我們一定要在我們的景況中參與，聆聽聖靈的呼喚而認出行動的方向。」(Sparks, p. 59)

C. 傾談的技巧

1. 主導式的對話 – 不要無目的的傾談，要主導式的。透過問問題，表示你對某事情或某人的興趣，從中主導對話，帶入你感到聖靈(忠信的同行 Faithful Presence)要你認識的話題
2. 留意 對方說話內容中，那裡與你有共通點。從中分享你有共同經歷或共同興趣，而大家建立信任的關係
3. 留意對方重覆的說話，你也跟住重覆他的用詞或用意，以表明你聽到他的信息
4. 建立關係時，也記得分享自己的經歷

D. 傾談的內容

1. 介紹你的名字
2. 生活上的趣事
3. 尋找大家的共通點
4. 鄰舍對社區的關心事情
5. 介紹聖基道堂，向他們表示我們想成為他們的鄰舍

E. 傾談後的跟進

1. 寫下鄰舍的資料，如名字，住所的街及屋的編號，職業，其他家人的名字等
2. 感到聖靈想帶你認識什麼？
3. 你需要採取什麼行動？ ... 如為那人代禱，答應了的東西就要跟進
4. 有什麼事情你感到教會應關注或應有行動表示關心鄰舍的，請通知牧師或堂長。例如剛搬入本區的新朋友，教會可怎樣關心他們。

F. 實習(10 分鐘)

- 兩人一組 – 試找一位你不熟識的營友
- 留意自己的態度，對方的態度
- 留意在對話中，誰在主導
- 用以上「D. 傾談的內容」去認識對方
- 10 分鐘後，用 5 分鐘時間填寫以上「E. 傾談後的跟進」
- 若有時間剩餘，大家分享自己的得著或有什麼提點可給與對方

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